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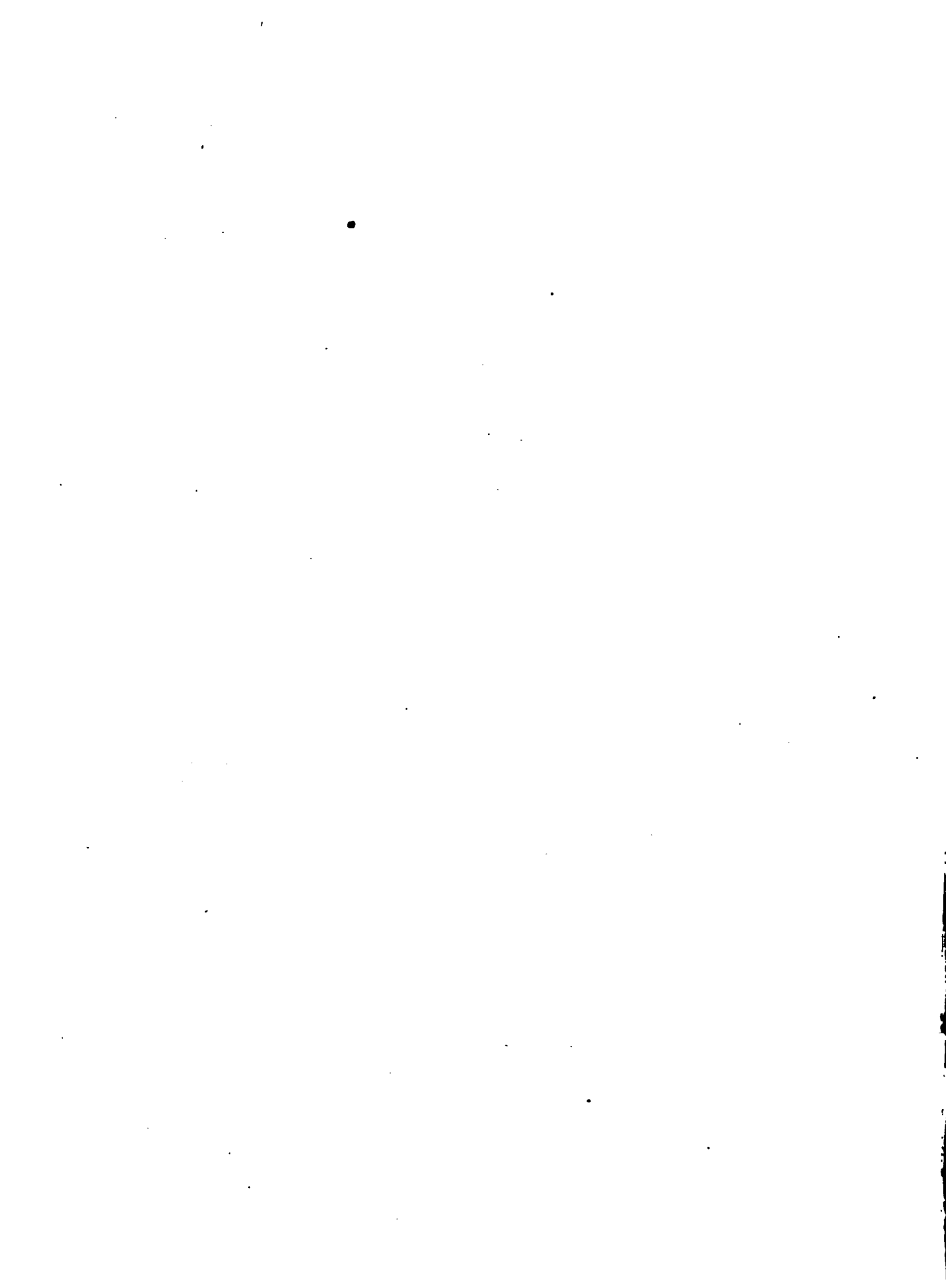


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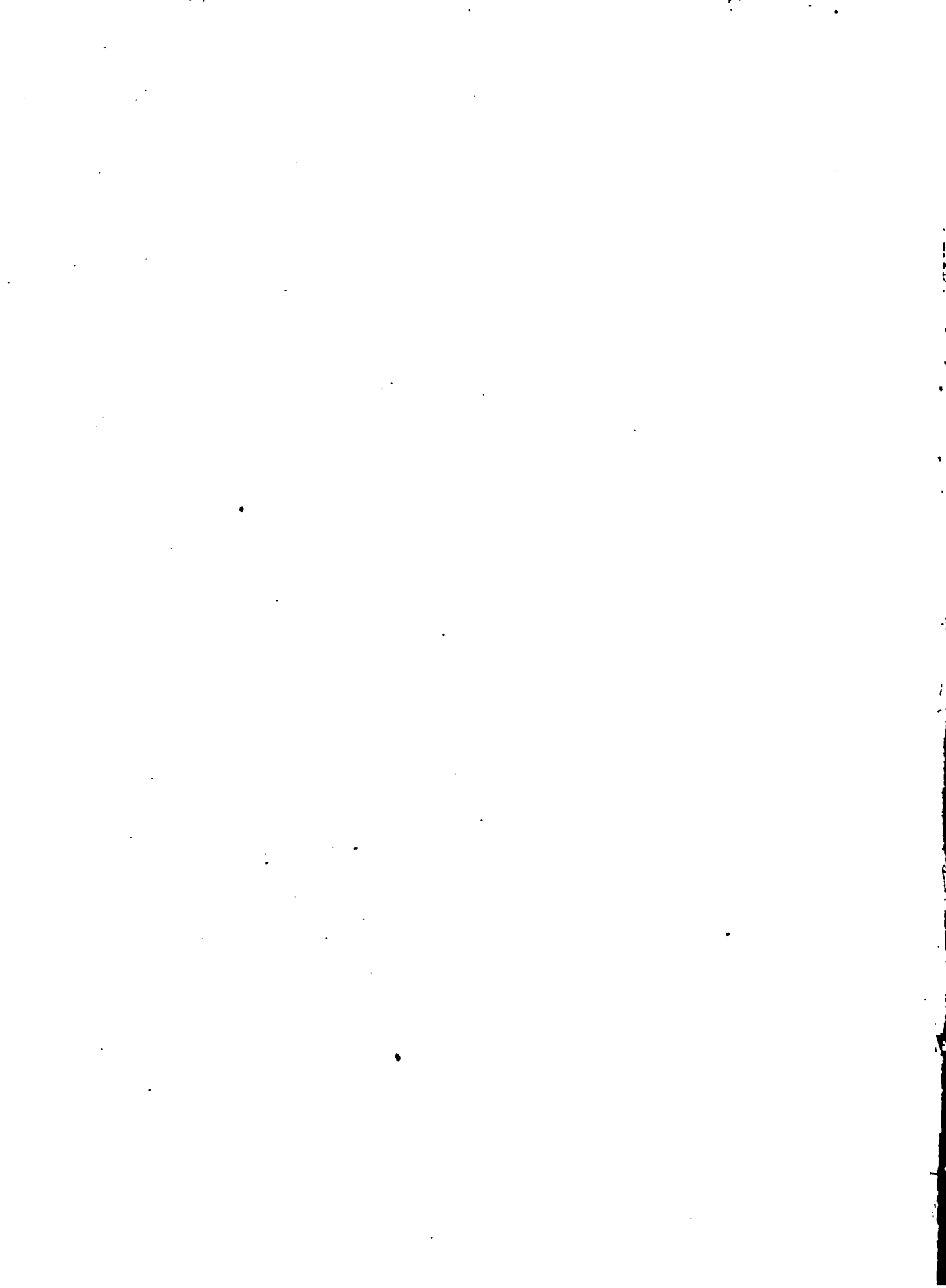
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A Picturesque  
History of Yorkshire

Volume Two







Channing Hotel on  
Market Bridge  
Boston, Mass.







# A Picturesque HISTORY OF YORKSHIRE

Being an *Account* of the *History, Topography,*  
and *Antiquities* of the *Cities, Towns* and  
*Villages* of the *County* of YORK, founded  
on *Personal Observations* made  
during many *Journeys* through  
the *Three Ridings*

BY  
J. S. Fletcher



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PRESTON UNDER SCAR

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## CHAPTER XXV

### Wakefield and its Neighbourhood

THE RIVER CALDER—THE COLLIERY DISTRICT—THE HOUSE OF PROPHET WROE—HEATH HALL—SHARLSTON OLD HALL—NOSTELL PARK—WALTON HALL AND CHARLES WATERTON—SANDAL CASTLE—WAKEFIELD—WAKEFIELD IN HISTORY—WAKEFIELD CATHEDRAL—THE CHAPEL ON THE BRIDGE—MODERN WAKEFIELD—SOUTH BANK OF THE CALDER.



THE river Calder, which rises in the wild country of the Lancashire border lying between Black Hambleton and Blackstone Edge, must in some long dead age have been one of the most striking and romantic of the rivers which flow through Yorkshire. For the greater part of its course it flows between high ground, the contour of which is always bold and sometimes of a most imposing character. Between the border town of Todmorden and Hebden Bridge the banks of the Calder rise to considerable heights, and the scenery beyond them is wild in the extreme. This boldness continues until the river is well within sight of Wakefield, from whence it passes on through comparatively flat country to join the Aire near Castleford. In the ages when this corner of England was either uninhabited or tenanted by a few groups of semi-savages the valley of the Calder must have presented an awe-inspiring aspect. Equally striking must have been the valleys through which its tributaries hasten to join it. The Hebden, the Ribourne, and the Colne all flow through the wildest and most picturesque valleys of the South-West Riding, and ere the district became as thickly populated as it now is, the surroundings of these feeders of the Calder doubtless presented innumerable pictures of striking scenery to whatever wanderer chanced to set eyes upon them. Nowadays, however, the character of the Calder and its surroundings is entirely changed. The natural lie of the land remains unaltered, but the steep hillsides are thickly covered with human habitations and with the human hives in which human labour is for ever going on, while the stream itself, instead of being clear and sparkling, is often sluggish and dirty, and here and there deeply stained by the refuse which is poured into it from the





CASTLEFORD FROM AIRE AND CALDER JUNCTION

great manufacturing towns. Nevertheless, the Calder is still one of the most interesting rivers in Yorkshire, for it passes through the most thickly populated district in the county, and at the same time gives access to some of the wildest scenery and the most solitary stretches of country which the broad-acred shire can show.

I

The traveller's first impressions of the Calder as he turns westward with it from its junction with the Aire near Castleford must needs be somewhat depressing. The river winds between uninviting banks through an equally uninviting country. On all sides are evidences of industry and unremitting toil in the shape of coal-mines and colliery villages. The air is thick with coal-dust, the sky even in the brightest weather seems to be obscured by the haze of continually rising smoke, and the vegetation, such as it is, is covered over by a sooty mantle, while the trees are stunted and gnarled, as if some evil wood-spirit had caused a blight to fall upon them. The villages in this district—Whitwood, Hoptown, and Altofts (the birthplace of Martin Frobisher) on one side of the river, Lofthouse, Stanley (the scene of the famous contest which was fought between Robin Hood and his men and the Pinder of Wakefield), and Outwood on the other—are all given up to coal-mining, and whatever romantic features they may once have possessed have well-nigh disappeared before the inroads of modern industry. Here and there the traveller comes across something of interest—an old house, a picturesquely situated church, or an oasis of green which seems to have

miraculously escaped the coal-dust ; but for the most part these villages are colonies of black-faced miners who live in rows of red-brick cottages, above the roofs of which towers the ugly overhead apparatus of the coal-mine, and whose lives, from a first impression, would appear to be passed in the most unenviable fashion.

About three miles from the north bank of the Calder, and closely adjacent to the village of Wrenthorpe, stands a remarkable house built by John Wroe, better known as Wroe the Prophet, who was one of the most impudent religious impostors known to history. The son of a worsted manufacturer at Bradford, Wroe, who was born in 1782, never received any education worth speaking of, and seems to have led an idle and purposeless life during his youth. In 1819 he had a serious illness, and on recovering from this he began to see visions and to receive commands to deliver a new gospel. During the next year or two he assumed the rôle of prophet in a tentative fashion, but in 1822 he boldly declared himself to the Society of Johanna Southcott, then in something of a flourishing state, as their heaven-sent Prophet. He quickly made a number of adherents, and being well supplied with money by them, he set out on a mission to the Jews, travelling extensively in England, Spain, France, Austria, Italy, and other countries. When he returned home he was publicly baptized in the river Aire, at Apperley Bridge, in the presence of 30,000 people, and three months later he was publicly circumcised at Ashton-under-Lyne. After this he continued his shameless ministry. Although a married man, he announced in 1830 that he had received divine orders that seven virgins should be delivered to him, to comfort and care for him, and three of his disciples at once gave up their daughters to him. With these unfortunate girls he wandered from place to place, readily imposing on the credulous. What manner of impostor he was may be judged from the following anecdote, related by the Rev. S. Baring Gould in his work on "Yorkshire Oddities" :— On one occasion Wroe announced that he was to lie in a trance for twelve days, and this beginning, people came from far and near to see him. At the foot of his bed was a basket in which visitors deposited gifts of money. At a fixed hour of the day all visitors were turned out, and the door of the house locked. One day Mrs. Wroe went out and forgot to fasten the door behind her. Two neighbours, watching their opportunity, opened the door and looked within, to discover the Prophet sitting in the ingle-nook, supping very comfortably on beef-steak, pickled cabbage, and oat-cake. Notwithstanding this and many other exposures, Wroe continued to flourish. In 1854 he announced that the spirit had commanded him to build a house for the believers, and to collect money for its erection from the latter, and subscriptions poured in readily. He bought a piece of land at Wrenthorpe and commenced to build a great mansion, on which large sums of money were spent. When it was finished he conveyed it to the Society by will, but immediately made another will, revoking the first, and leaving his ill-gotten

## PICTURESQUE YORKSHIRE

property to his son James. Wroe, in addition to his continental travels, visited America in 1840, 1848, 1853, and 1859, and Australia, where he had a large and credulous following, in 1850, 1854, 1859, and 1862. He died in Australia in the last-named year, and his followers there complained bitterly of his conduct, for he had pledged his word to them that he would never die.

The south bank of the Calder at this stage of its course is very much more attractive and infinitely more picturesque than the north. As it draws near to Wakefield the river runs at the foot of a high, well-wooded cliff, on the extreme height of which stands a finely-situated mansion, Heath Hall, behind which lies the village of Heath, one of the most charming places in the West Riding. Heath Hall, which is often compared to the castellated strongholds which look down on the Rhine, was built during the reign of Elizabeth by one of the Kayes of Dalton and his wife, one of the Dodsworths of Shelley, and their arms appear over the entrance, beneath those of the Queen in whose days the house arose. The village of Heath, a colony of delightfully situated houses and cottages embowered in trees, looks down upon Heath Common, a favourite resort of the devotees of golf, and a picturesque spot at all times. From the south side of the

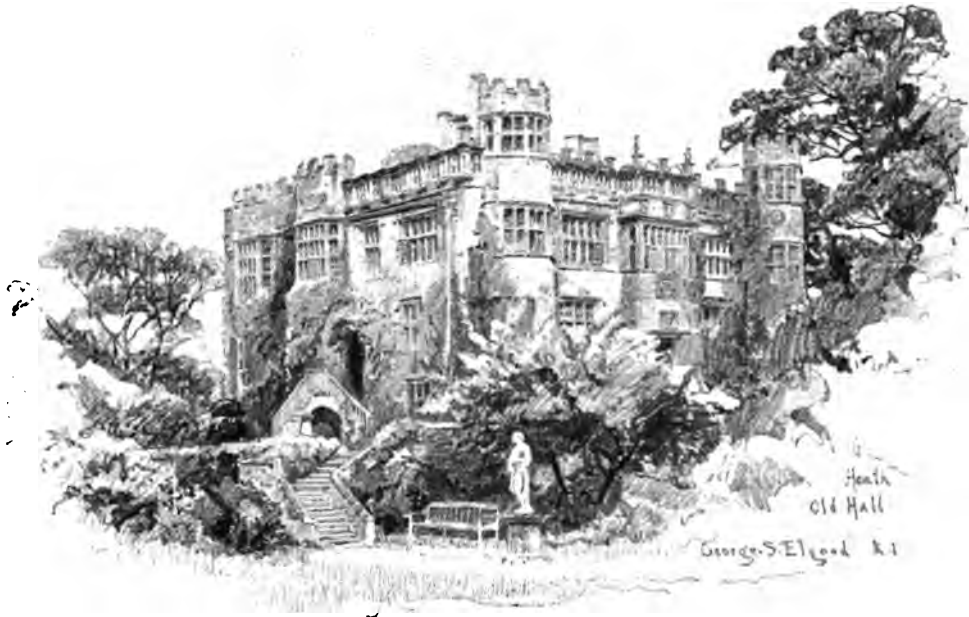
common a pleasant highroad leads to Crofton, an ancient village with an Anglo-Celtic origin, situated amidst delightful surroundings, although in close proximity to the coal-mining districts. Within a short circle of this place there are numerous mansions and villages of note and interest. There is a fine old hall at Sharleston, now used as a farmstead, and another at Kettlethorpe which has much interest for literary folk because it was at one time the residence of the Hon. Mrs. Norton. All the halls hereabouts—



Heath Hall.  
*J. P. Symonds*

Sharleston, Crofton, Kettlethorpe, Blacker, Chapelthorpe, and Walton—were in former days outposts of the castle at Sandal, one of the strongest and most important fortified places in the North, and now but a heap of ruins.

A little distance along the road from Crofton, going in an easterly direction, lies Nostell Park, one of the principal seats of the county, and amongst



the most interesting of its show-places. Originally a Priory of the Augustinian Canons, founded early in the twelfth century by Henry I., Nostell has for about three centuries been in possession of the Winns (created Barons St. Oswald, 1885), one of whom, Rowland, built the present magnificent mansion about 1700. Nostell Priory was famous throughout England in mediæval times for its wealth, and for the privileges which attached to it. It had vast possessions and great power in the north of England, and its exceeding flourishing condition seems to have done it little good eventually, for there were grave scandals concerning it at a period just previous to the Dissolution, and its community were deeply in debt. Leland saw it during his journeyings in these parts, and speaks of it as being an imposing place—“a very fair and wel builded Howse of Chanons,” with “a mervelus fair conduct of water.” He speaks too of a “pretty pool” at the west end of the house. This, now known as Nostell Dam, is crossed by a handsome stone bridge, from which the traveller may obtain a fine view of the present mansion. The exterior of the latter, though somewhat plain in style, is very imposing, and the interior is chiefly remarkable for a fine collection of paintings, amongst which is Holbein’s well-known portrait group of Sir

Thomas More and his family. There are also some excellent examples of Ruysdael, Van der Hoeck, Van der Velde, Jan Miel, Guercino, Wynants, Gerritz van Herp, and other masters. Nostell Park, which contains about 250 acres, was enclosed in the reign of James I. Close to its principal entrance, and within the park, stands the picturesque church of Wragby—a quaint little village a short distance away along the road, in the ecclesiastical parish of which Nostell is situated. This church, which is remarkable for the striking character of its surroundings, is chiefly of the Transitional style of architecture, and contains a good deal of Norman work, the font, in particular, being a very fine specimen. There is a monument by Flaxman in the north aisle in memory of Sir Rowland Winn, *ob.* 1765, and another by Chantrey, in the south aisle, in memory of John Winn, *ob.* 1817, and the church further contains a quantity of carving by foreign artists. From the ground without the church there are some charming views of the park, which is made additionally attractive by the presence of a large herd of deer. There are few places in Yorkshire which will so well repay the traveller for his exertions in seeking them as this splendid domain.

Another country seat, with a history not less interesting than that of Nostell, though of quite a different character, is Walton Hall, a little distance away across country and beyond the lake-like reservoir of Ryhill. This picturesque old house, which in its present form was built during the reign of Queen Anne, is famous as having been the house of Charles Waterton, the naturalist and traveller, whose menagerie of wild animals and aviary of rare birds used to attract scientists from far and near, and formed the talk of the countryside. Leland found a Waterton living at Walton when he came to this part of England, and speaks of him as being the possessor of fair lands and dwelling in a pretty manor house. This, the first Walton Hall, was the scene of various conflicts during the Civil War. It was garrisoned for the King by Sir F. Wortley, and was captured by the Parliamentary forces in May 1644, and again in 1648. The present house is very remarkable in appearance. It stands on a huge rock in the midst of a lake of considerable size, which was considerably enlarged about a century ago, and is connected with the mainland by a bridge. When Charles Waterton lived here the shores of the lake were tenanted by a large settlement of herons, guillemots, and various sorts of sea-fowl, and the surrounding woods contained almost every species of English bird. At that time the house was a veritable museum of curiosities and specimens of natural history, principally collected by Waterton during his travels in North and South America. Waterton himself was a man of much eccentricity, and was given to strange habits, such as sleeping on the floor with a block of wood for a pillow, dressing in odd and fantastical fashion, and otherwise disassociating himself from conventionalism. He was born at Walton Hall in 1782, and died there in 1865.

At a short distance from the south bank of the Calder, and about half-way between Walton and Wakefield, the traveller will perceive some ruins standing on the highest point of the rising ground on his left hand. These are all that is left of Sandal Castle, one of the most ancient and historic places in the neighbourhood, and at one time a principal stronghold of the north. If the name Sandal is derived from the old English *sond* = sandy, and *aula* = hall, the place has a very considerable antiquity, and there appears to be little doubt that there was a fortified house here in the eighth century, at which time the artificial mound



on which the castle stood was thrown up. According to the Domesday returns Sandal belonged to the Crown, and after the Conquest it was given to William, Earl of Warren and Surrey, and son-in-law of the Conqueror, who probably strengthened the wooden buildings which he found there. It was during the time of the seventh Earl Warren, in the thirteenth century, that the castle, as it was known in the Middle Ages, was erected, though a considerable portion of it was destroyed by fire in 1317. Between that year and 1328 the castle was restored. It covered an area of nearly six acres, and consisted of a large courtyard, enclosed by a battlemented curtain-wall, varying from eight to ten feet in thickness, with a keep on the summit of the mound, and a moat, crossed by a drawbridge, surrounding the whole. The keep was very strong and of imposing aspect, and had three towers, facing north, south, and west. When the last of the De Warrens died in the middle of the fourteenth century, Sandal passed into the hands of Edmund of Langley, Earl of Cambridge, who in 1385 was created Duke of York by his nephew, Richard II. He occasionally resided here during his possession of the estates, which passed at his death to his son Edward, killed at Agincourt in 1415, and then to his nephew Richard, who was slain at what is commonly known as the Battle of Wakefield in 1460. His son, Edward the Fourth,

erected a cross in memory of him at the place where he fell, but it was destroyed during the siege of Sandal Castle in 1645. Richard III. spent a good deal of time at Sandal, and was very popular in the neighbourhood. In 1495 the castle was declared to be a Crown possession, and half a century later it was handed over to the Duchy of Lancaster, with Sir John Tempest as constable at a yearly fee of £17, 6s. 8d. In 1566 Elizabeth granted it to Edward Carey, and during the next hundred years it passed through the hands of the Saviles, one of whom, Sir John, was first Mayor of Leeds, M.P. for the county, and created Baron Savile of Pontefract in 1628, to those of the Beaumonts of Whitley, in whose possession it was when the Civil War broke out. It was garrisoned for the king in 1645, and was besieged by a Parliamentary force under Sir John Savile. Pontefract Castle was in a state of siege at the same time, and the defenders of both were in the habit of exchanging signals and greetings by the lighting of bonfires. Pontefract surrendered on July 20th, but Sandal held out until the end of September, when its garrison, numbering 100 officers and men, were given safe convoy to Welbeck, leaving their arms and munition behind them. In the following year the castle was dismantled by order of the Parliament, and it is highly probable that much of the stone was used in building the houses of the neighbouring village. At one time one of the strongest fortresses in the county, Sandal Castle is now a mere shadow of its ancient self, and is chiefly remarkable for the advantageous position of its site, from which there are wide prospects over the surrounding country.

## II

Wakefield, one of the most ancient centres of population in Yorkshire and now a cathedral city, and therefore of like eminence with its sister city of Ripon, is often described by the guide-books as one of the handsomest towns in the county. A first prospect of it, from whatever outlying part of it is first reached by the traveller, scarcely warrants this somewhat exaggerated description. There is little in its general appearance which makes one realise that Wakefield is of a venerable antiquity, or the centre of an important ecclesiastical district. Like almost every town and city in the West Riding, it bears distinct evidences of a hearty devotion to toil and industry, and it goes beyond the efforts of most of them in the fact that its occupations are many and various. When Leland came here three hundred years ago he observed that the Wakefield folk were entirely given up to the manufacture of cloth—nowadays they manufacture all sorts of commodities from cloth to chemicals, and in addition to that they are famous throughout the whole of the north country for their corn and cattle markets. Wakefield, indeed, is one of the busiest of our smaller English cities, and though there is small trace of ancient things within its borders, something in its general character is strongly reminiscent of the old days.

In one respect it is still of a complexion with the mediæval Wakefield which Leland saw. He found it well served of flesh and fish, and able to afford good faring at twopence a meal, and though prices have increased since his time, the old itinerant would have nothing to complain of if he dined at any of the naries which are set Wakefield market-day. Wakefield was mainly noted that there were Nowadays Wakefield old in the shape of bered houses in Kirk-Chimneys, and like and cities it has its ones. The surround-longest street, are attractive, but in the Town Hall and in the rally the buildings are and the residential quarter known as St. John's is one of the pleasantest suburbs in the county.



ARMS OF WAKEFIELD

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large and handsome,

At the time of the Norman Conquest Wakefield was the property of the Crown, and it was conferred by the Conqueror upon William, Earl of Warren and Surrey, together with the manor and castle of Sandal. To one of his successors, another William, King John (who personally visited the town in 1210) granted in 1204 the privilege of holding a fair in Wakefield on the vigil, feast, and morrow of All Saints (October 31, November 1-2), and this was held annually until 1736. Another fair was granted in 1331, to be held at the feast of St. Oswald. These fairs were held in the churchyard, and the folks who attended them were amused in the intervals of business by miracle plays performed by the priests. In 1298 a charter was granted to the inhabitants of Wakefield which freed the burgesses from toll, pontage, and tronage, and gave them permission to take dead wood from the neighbouring forest for fuel, to have commonage for cattle on the lands outside the town, and to enclose their own fields and frighten away deer, of which there were at that time large herds in the neighbourhood. In 1331 the town was in much need of paving, and Earl Warren endeavoured to force the burgesses to do the necessary work, but on their steady refusal a compromise was effected, by the terms of which Earl Warren took the customs of the town for three years and did the paving himself. In 1348 one Sir Richard de Goldsborough caused to be held here a tournament, whereat there was so much blood spilt that a great noise was made at court, where Sir Richard was called to account and reprimanded. The most important event in the mediæval history of



Wakefield was the battle between the Yorkists and Lancastrians, fought there in 1460. This engagement took place in the fields lying between Wakefield and Sandal Castle, and until comparatively recent times three willow trees marked the spot where the Duke of York was slain. Near these trees (the last of which disappeared in 1865) a gold ring was discovered about 1650, on which were engraved figures of the Virgin and two Saints, and furnished with the motto, *Pour bon Amour*, and at the building of Portobello House, close by, a large number of relics of the battle-field were unearthed in 1825, in the shape of swords, daggers, stirrups, and bones. It was commonly said that Queen Margaret herself was present at the Battle of Wakefield, and that she set the vanquished duke upon an ant-hill, and after placing a paper crown upon his head derided him ere she and Clifford stabbed him to death, and this legend is used by Shakespeare in the "Third Part of King Henry VI.," but, according to the researches of Professor Freeman, Margaret was in Scotland at the time, and had therefore no share in the events of the battle. It was during this battle that Lord Clifford, called the Butcher because of his rapacious seeking out and slaying of his enemies, stabbed the young Earl of Rutland. Of the 5000 men whom the Duke of York led forth from Sandal Castle to give battle to the Lancastrian forces, nearly one-half were slain, and buried in great trenches dug across the battlefield. There was another Battle of Wakefield on Whit-Sunday, 1643, when Royalists and Parliamentarians fought out their differences in the churchyard. During the same century three markets were established or were in active existence in Wakefield—the weekly corn market in 1630, the cloth market in 1656, and the leather market in 1675. The cattle market did not come into being until 1765, and was much opposed by some of the folk in the neighbourhood. In 1701 the Calder was rendered navigable, and the Aire being similarly dealt with at the same time, the trade of the town began to increase. When Daniel Defoe visited the town previous to 1727 he found it very prosperous, and he attributed its happy condition to the improvement in its water communication and to the building of a cloth hall. During the next hundred years Wakefield continued to prosper, and in 1832 its inhabitants were enfranchised and empowered to send one member to Parliament. In 1848 it was granted a charter of incorporation, and became a municipal borough, governed by a mayor, eight aldermen, and twenty-four councillors. As the capital town of the West Riding it affords a home for the West Riding County Council, the magnificent offices of which have recently been erected at a cost of about £230,000, and it is also the principal meeting-place of the magistrates of the same Riding, who hold their quarter-sessions here in the spacious court-house. In 1888 Wakefield gave its name to a new diocese, its first bishop being Dr. Walsham How, who had previously been Suffragan Bishop of Bedford.

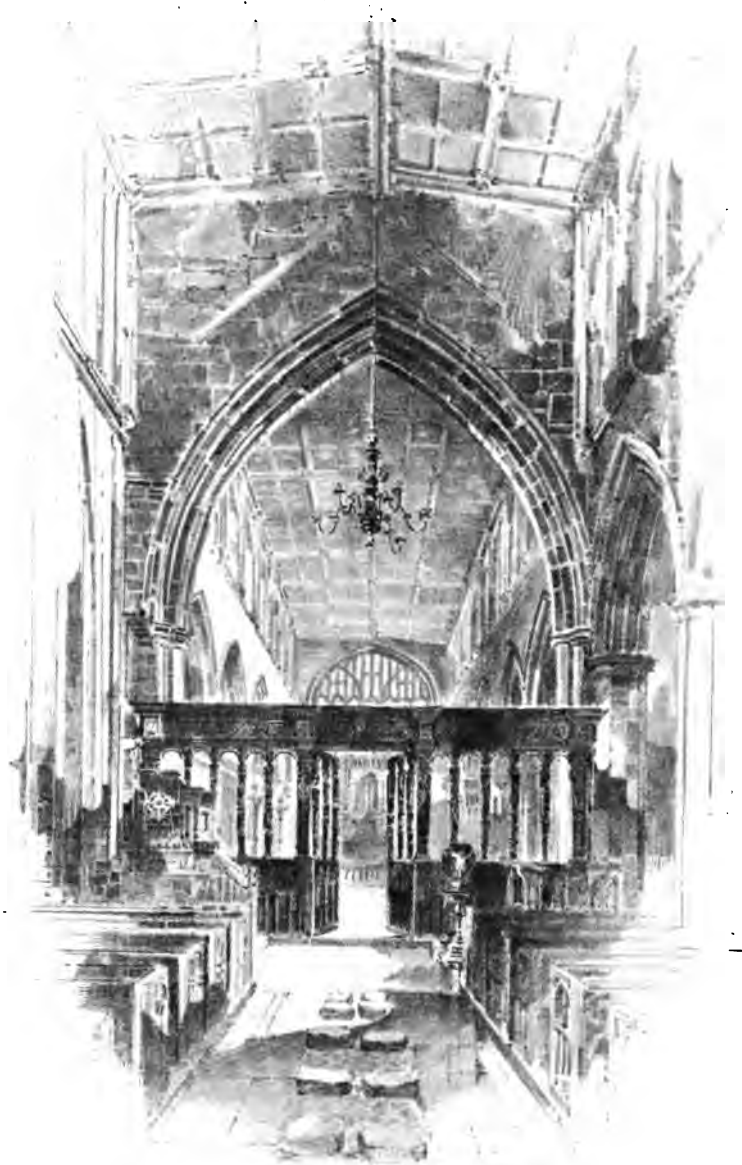
Of the old-world Wakefield, which has now almost entirely passed out



Wakefield Cathedral.  
H. G. S. 1852

of sight, only some small memories are in existence. The old house in Kirkgate, known by the curious name of Six Chimneys, is an Elizabethan structure, and at one time had a small stream flowing through its garden ; which, with the adjoining stables, was of considerable extent. Another fine old house, Hasleden Hall, built by the Hasleden family about 1450, and reconstructed by George Savile in 1584, is chiefly erected of wood. It has gardens at the rear, a courtyard entered by an archway, a wooden arcaded cloister, and a lofty hall, with gabled roof, flying springers, panelled walls, and heraldic glass in the windows. The Market Cross, removed in 1866, was built in 1710, and replaced an older one which was built about 1400. The pillars of the Cross of 1710 are preserved in the neighbourhood, two of them being at Alverthorpe Hall, a little way out of Wakefield. There was a pillory in Westgate until the beginning of the present century, and it had also been set up in the Bull Ring, where bull-fights were held until comparatively recent times. The stocks stood in the churchyard, and on the bridge over the Calder there was a ducking-stool for the correction of scolds and shrews. At New Wells there was a bathing-house, built over a spring which was said to possess certain healing properties. Along the Ings horse-racing was indulged in, and from the Calder, which was evidently a river of considerable purity in those days, many salmon used to be taken a hundred years ago. That the river, now so unattractive, was then prolific of fish may be judged from the fact that the indentures of the Wakefield apprentices used to contain a clause to the effect that they should not have salmon more than three times a week.

At the time of the Conquest the parish church, now the cathedral, of Wakefield, was a small building in the form of a cross, having a central tower but no aisles. In the eleventh century a north aisle, the pillars of which were Norman, was added, and about 1120 the church was enlarged by the addition of a south aisle, which had Early English pillars. During the twelfth century the tower fell, and destroyed most of the church, which was not rebuilt until the beginning of the fourteenth century. It was then re-erected in the Decorated style, and had three altars. A tower was erected in 1409 which stood clear of the church itself. There was difficulty in obtaining funds for building purposes, but some persuasion and threatening by the Archbishop of York induced the people of Wakefield to come forward with pious offerings, and the church was extended to the tower, the clerestory erected, and a new roof put on, while porches were built on the north and south sides. In 1458 Thomas Hawkin left forty shillings for the purpose of building the chancel aisles, and twelve years later the church as it now stands was complete. Much of the furniture now seen in the church was in it at that time, and in general appearance it has suffered comparatively little alteration for four centuries. The fabric has naturally undergone a good deal of



Le Chœur  
de la Cathédrale  
de Chartres  
par M. L. L. L.

renovation. The south front was rebuilt in 1724, and the greater part of the north side and of the east end was re-erected about seventy years later. During the thirty years ending in 1886 much repairing and restoring was carried out, including the rebuilding in 1861 of the spire on the lines of the original one. Exteriorly and interiorly Wakefield Cathedral is one of the handsomest ecclesiastical edifices in Yorkshire, and its fine square tower and lofty spire, which is very elegantly crocketed, would deserve even greater notice than it does if it stood in a more commanding position. The chief features of the interior are the clustered pillars which divide the nave from the aisles, the fine screen at the entrance to the chancel, and the glass in the south aisle, which is an excellent imitation of ancient glass work.

To the majority of people the most curious and interesting thing in Wakefield is the chantry chapel on the bridge which crosses the Calder at the south end of the city. There were originally four chantry chapels in Wakefield, that on the bridge (dedicated to St. Mary); another in Westgate, dedicated to St. Mary Magdalene; one in St. John's Field, bearing the name of that saint; and a fourth near Clarke Hall, dedicated to St. Swithin. Of these only the one on the bridge is left. Few people who visit Wakefield and look at the bridge chapel are aware that they are regarding practically new work. What is left of the original chapel stands in the grounds of Kettlethorpe Hall, a few miles outside the city, and what the traveller sees from the foot of the bridge is the result of well-intended but singularly unfortunate restoration. According to the results of a careful investigation by Dr. Walker, St. Mary's Chapel on Wakefield Bridge was probably founded by the townsfolk soon after 1342, and built contemporaneously with the bridge itself. The earlier records of this foundation are somewhat vague, but it would appear that the chantry was served by two priests, who lived in a small house close by, which was in existence as recently as 1840. At the time of the compilation of the *Valor Ecclesiasticus* in 1534, the annual value of the chantry was £12, 8s. 11d., and its two priests, Richard Seal and Tristram Harton, had each an income of £6, 3s. 7d. The value at the Dissolution of chantries was £14, 15s. 3d.; of the ornaments and vestments, £1, 2s. 6d., and of the plate, £4, 4s. 8d. The priests, Seal and Harton, were described as "unlearned," and as being respectively sixty-four and fifty-four years of age, and in 1548 they were assigned a pension of £5 per annum as long as no better preferment came to them. The chantry was allowed to stand, "for that it is builded upon the myddlemoste arche of the said bridge of Wakefield beinge no smalle strengthe therunto," and when Mary came to the throne the services were resumed. On Elizabeth's succession in 1558 the priests were again driven forth, and soon afterwards the chantry and some adjacent property was given over to the trustees of the general poor of Wakefield, by whom it was let off to various tenants. From this time until 1842 the chantry was

used in strange fashion. It was occupied by an old clothes-dealer, "who was in the habit of hanging on the precious trceries his filthy ware;" after that it was used by a warehouseman; then as a news-room and library; then as a cheese-cake shop, a corn-factor's office, and finally as a tailoring establishment. In 1842 a movement was started for the restoration of the building and its subsequent use as a place of worship, and in the following year Sir Gilbert Scott was commissioned to undertake the necessary work. The whole of the chantry above the basement was pulled down, and the west front purchased



CHANTRY, WAKEFIELD BRIDGE, BEFORE RESTORATION

by the Hon. G. C. Norton, who erected it in his grounds at Kettlethorpe. The new fabric erected by Sir Gilbert Scott was a copy of the old one, but the Bath and Caen stone used for the west front have so decayed that the ancient work at Kettlethorpe is in quite as good a state of preservation as the new work. "It was in an evil hour," Sir Gilbert Scott wrote in the *Ecclesiologist* some time afterwards, that he allowed "a new front in Caen stone in place of the weather-beaten old one. . . . I never repented it but once, and that has been ever since. . . . I think of this with the utmost shame and chagrin." It is said that Sir Gilbert Scott was so anxious to have the old front replaced that some years before his death he offered to contribute freely towards its repurchase and replacement, but his appeal failed to arouse any enthusiasm and came to naught.

As the capital of the West Riding, Wakefield possesses some very notable public buildings and institutions. Its Town Hall, an imposing building in the style of the French Renaissance, was erected in 1880 at a cost of £80,000. Quite as imposing in another fashion are the Offices of the West Riding County Council, and near these two principal buildings is a third of equal pretensions in the West Riding Sessions House. The Corn Exchange is the second largest building used for dealings in the corn trade in England. The Gaol of the West Riding and the Pauper Lunatic Asylum of the same division are buildings of considerable extent, and the Clayton Hospital is one of the most important in Yorkshire. Since Wakefield was created a cathedral city and the centre of an important diocese, a palace for its bishop has been erected at Bishopgarth amidst pleasant surroundings. The city possesses some admirable institutions in the shape of a Mechanics' Institute and a Church Institute, and its Grammar School, originally founded in 1592 by Queen Elizabeth, is renowned for its



OLD INN AT FLOCKTON

successes. Of celebrities Wakefield has given birth to not a few. Burton, author of the famous *Monasticon*, was born here in 1697; Potter, Archbishop of Canterbury, and author of "The Antiquities of Greece," in 1674; Bingham, author of *Origines Ecclesiasticæ*, in 1668. Two benefactors of Oxford, John Radcliffe, founder of the library which bears his name, and Richard Fleming, founder of Lincoln College, were Wakefield men, and Richard Bentley, the great classical scholar and critic, though born at Oulton, was closely associated with the town and educated at its Grammar School, which was also the school of Archbishop Potter and of Dr. Radcliffe.

## III

One of the most interesting excursions in the neighbourhood of the valley of the Calder is one which may be made by following the highroad from Wakefield into the valley, crossing the river at Horbury Bridge, and thence going forward until the high ground above Huddersfield comes in sight. Such an excursion, whether taken by a strict adherence to the highway or by such deviations as the traveller's fancy may adopt, will conduct him to points of vantage from which some truly remarkable views and prospects stretching over wide expanses of country may be obtained. Nor is such an excursion without historical and topographical interest. The halls of Thornes and Lupset on the north bank of the Calder, and of Bullcliffe, on the south, are finely situated amongst thick masses of

vegetation, and the situation of Horbury, now a village of the size of many a market town, on a steep hillside, is romantic and striking. From the highroad near Midgley, at the ninth milestone on the turnpike leading from Barnsley to Huddersfield, the traveller on a clear day may obtain one of the most remarkable views in Yorkshire—a view extending from the Park Hill at Pontefract across Sandal, Wakefield, Horbury, Ossett, and the district of the Spenn Valley on the north side of the river, and over the woods and parks of Woolley and Bretton, and the high ground of Hoyland to the rugged peaks of the Pennine Range on the south. For extent and variety of scenery few views in the county are superior to this.

The highroads from Wakefield and Barnsley running towards Huddersfield meet at Flockton, a long straggling village romantically situated on a hillside, from which there are wide and striking prospects of the Pennine Range of hills as they near the south-west borders of the county. Close to the junction of these highways at Flockton the traveller will meet with one of the most curious and interesting roadside inns in Yorkshire. Its legitimate name is the George and Dragon, but it is more usually known in the district as Noah's Ark, or as the Chained Poker, the last title coming from its possession of two ancient pokers, securely chained to the hearth in its principal room. It is a timbered house of the date of Henry VII., and though it has at various times been restored and repaired, nothing has interfered with its antiquated aspect. From this point the road passes on over hilly ground which gradually rises until at the part known as Highgate Lane, with the woods of Whitley and Denby on its north side, it reaches an elevation from whence the hills of the Colne Valley are seen almost immediately in front. Here there is a striking prospect of an eminence known as Castle Hill, a boldly-outlined eminence which rises above Almondbury and Huddersfield to a great height, and forms a landmark which may be seen over many miles of country. From here the land drops again in sharp and sudden curves into the valley of the Colne, going westward, and into the valley of the Calder going northward by Whitley and Hopton.



## CHAPTER XXVI

### Surroundings of the Spen Valley

A THICKLY-POPULATED CORNER OF THE COUNTY—ITS TRADE AND INDUSTRIES—CHARACTERISTIC FEATURES OF ITS SCENERY—PRINCIPAL TOWNS AND VILLAGES—DEWSBURY—BATLEY—BATTLE OF ADWALTON MOOR—TONG—BIERLEY HALL—THE SPEN VALLEY—ASSOCIATIONS OF THIS DISTRICT WITH CHARLOTTE BRONTË—HARTSHEAD—ROE HEAD—OAKWELL HALL.

#### I



THE country lying on the north bank of the Calder between Wakefield and Brighouse, and in the two principal valleys which run northward from the river, is almost without exception the most thickly-populated corner of Yorkshire. A line drawn on the map from Wakefield to a point somewhat south of Brighouse, thence northward to the edge of Bradford, from thence due east to a point near Leeds, and onward in a south-easterly direction to Wakefield again, would enclose within itself a district so crowded with towns and villages that it is somewhat difficult to perceive where one is separated from another. Within this district there are several places of a size so considerable that if they were situated in a more sparsely populated country they would rank as towns of great importance. Solitude is almost an impossibility in this corner of the world, though the district, built up as it is, is not without some spots still sacred to Nature, and still unspoiled of their original beauty. At one time one of the wildest and most lonely stretches of earth in the county, this neighbourhood is now full of evidences of man's restless energy in the pursuit of wealth. Its hills and valleys are crowded by human habitations, a network of railways enfolds it as in a spider's web, and it is intersected from every point by highroads connecting the great towns on its borders with the smaller ones in its midst. The overground works of collieries, the tall chimneys of mills and manufactories, and the long, monotonous expanses of stone wall, pierced by cheerless-looking windows, which the mills present, are in sight everywhere, and though the

traveller not unfrequently comes across some delightful old church or manor-house, some romantic scene in a hillside wood, or some village picture suggesting less busy days, it is impossible to avoid the feeling that this comparatively small square of earth in the heart of the West Riding is nothing but a great hive of industry, wherein the human bees never cease from toiling. As for the particular mode of their toiling all that might be said could only be said by a specialist. There are several industries in the district, but its most thickly populated parts are chiefly given up to the manufacture of heavy woollen goods. At Dewsbury and Batley the manufactories provide material for the making of the heavier sorts of cloth, and at the latter place there is a considerable manufacture of the article known as shoddy. This material, which was first invented, or originated, in 1813, and was first used at Batley, is made by mixing with wool the shreadings of old woollen and worsted rags ; and though the trade in it met with much disfavour as being of a somewhat dishonest character, it rapidly grew to enormous dimensions, and has given employment to vast numbers of workpeople in the heavy woollen district. Naturally, the atmosphere of the more crowded centres of population in this district has a distinct flavour of wool in it, and the traveller who wanders about the streets of Dewsbury or Cleckheaton, Batley or Heckmondwike, will perceive odours which, however suggestive of the wealth of the neighbourhood, are not so full of delicate perfume as of an obtrusive oleaginous quality.

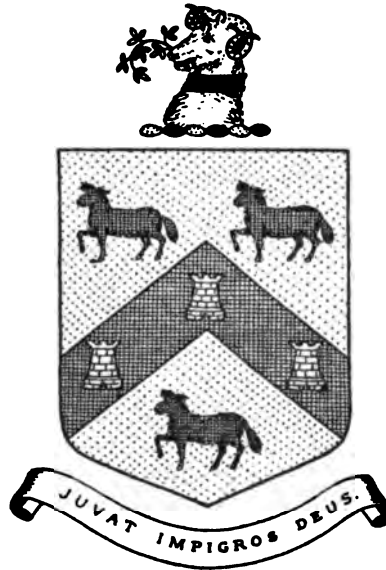
## II

Of the principal centres of population in this crowded district on the north bank of the Calder, Dewsbury is the most important. It occupies a somewhat romantic position at the mouth of a valley running northward from the river, and in ancient times must have presented a wild and solitary appearance. On its east side steep crags overhang the town, and the roadways which climb their rugged sides in the direction of Leeds or Wakefield are so steep as to strike dismay into even the stoutest heart. The greater part of the town, however, is built on flat land in the bottom of the valley. Its buildings, like those of many other Yorkshire towns of its class, are a curious blend of the ancient and the modern. It possesses several which will compare not unfavourably with those of some of the larger towns, and it can also show some quaint, old-fashioned streets in the stone-walled houses of which the hand-loom weaver used no doubt to ply his trade. Now a place of hard, grinding industry, Dewsbury has a history which goes back far into the mists of ages. It was a Roman station, and has afforded traces and evidences of the Roman occupation on more than one occasion. In Angle times it was the centre of a vast parish extending over an area of 400 square miles, and it was visited during the seventh century by Paulinus, who preached a mission here,

probably in a small church which stood on the site of the present parish church. In the Domesday Book Dewsbury is called *Dewsberia*, or *God-field*, and its sister borough of Ossett—a new enough looking place now, but in reality an old Roman station—*Osleset*, or *God-hall*. What its history was during the Middle Ages no chronicler has told us, but it was a mere village a hundred years ago, and has risen to its present importance through the spread of the woollen manufacture. Its parish church was rebuilt in 1667, and enlarged about twelve years ago, and is able building in the thirteenth century. Its Town Hall, the finest building in the place, was erected in 1886, and presents a very striking appearance seen from the wide market-place. There is also a well-built good Grammar School, but the most significant edifices in Dewsbury and its suburbs are, after all, the great mills wherein the manufacture of heavy woollen goods is always going on.

To the lover of certain precious antiquities there are things to be seen at Dewsbury in the shape of some exceedingly venerable crosses and effigies preserved in the parish church. Of

these, the principal is the cross—or rather the remnants of it—of which Camden says he heard, on reliable authority, that it bore the inscription, *Hic Paulinus Prædicavit et Celebravit*. There is also a stone with figures carved upon it, one being of the Saviour in the act of benediction, but this, like all the other relics of a long dead age, is much worn and defaced. There are also two incised cross slabs, on the larger of which are the figures of two birds having serpents' tails, supporting a cross with a floriated head. The smaller slab shows a plainer cross, rising from double Calvary steps. On this slab is a representation of a pair of shears, which probably means that the person whom the slab commemorates was a considerable owner of sheep. There are also preserved here the head of a cowled monk in stone, possibly meant to be an effigy of Paulinus, and the centre portion of an upright Saxon cross. At St. Michael's, Thornhill, a venerable and beautiful church a little south of Dewsbury, there are some other very interesting fragments of Saxon and Runic crosses, one of which gives part of the epitaph in stave-rhyme, and has been declared by an acknowledged authority to be a portion of the monu-



THE ARMS OF DEWSBURY

ment of an Osberht who probably found refuge at Thornhill and died there in some hermitage.

Between Batley and Dewsbury there is no appreciable break in the long lines of solid stone houses and great mills, but Batley itself is much more pleasantly situated than the older borough. It lies at the foot and on the shelving sides of a hill which tops a minor stream running down to the Calder, and is liberally surrounded with woods, in some parts of which there are still romantic and picturesque corners left for the solace of the lover of nature. Though not of such antiquity as Dewsbury, Batley had a pre-Norman existence. It is described in Domesday Book as being in the hands of Ilbert de Lacy, and in the occupation of Dunstan, Stainulf, and Westi, who between them had five carucates of land to be taxed, which were worked by two ploughs. It had then a church, and a priest to serve it, and its value in Edward the Confessor's time was twenty shillings. The present parish church of Batley is the most ancient thing in the place, and contains various matters of interest. Its architecture is of the time of Henry VI., and consists of nave, chancel, north and south aisles, and a tower, finely embattled, at the west end. Here several of the Earls of Sussex and Barons Savile are interred, and the names of the latter family frequently occur

in the registers and on the tombstones. The Savile family resided for some time at Howley Hall, close by. This is one of the numerous ancient houses of this district, which was once rich in its possession of well-built, picturesque halls and manors, several of which have fallen on evil days. Purlwell Hall is now divided into small tenements; the fine old hall at Carlinghow, on





TONG

which appears the date 1560, is much changed ; and Staincliffe Hall has been restored, and though its restoration has been accomplished with taste and discernment, the necessary renovations have somewhat taken away from its air of antiquity. Between these old houses and the new Batley, with its great mills and factories, and its continual bustle and labour, there is a great difference—a difference as striking almost as the difference between the Batley of the Domesday Book and the Batley which was important enough thirty years ago to be made a borough and have a mayor of its own.

The country lying between Batley and Tong is somewhat more interesting than that nearer the Calder. At Birstall the traveller is in the heart of a district particularly dear to Charlotte Brontë ; at Adwalton Moor, between Birstall and Morley, he is on the site of one of the most important engagements which took place in Yorkshire during the Civil War. This was fought in June 1643 between the Parliamentarians under Lord Fairfax and the Royalists under the Earl of Newcastle, and after a severe contest resulted in a victory for the latter. The principal points whereat the engagements were most fiercely contested were on the plateau lying between Adwalton and Birkenshaw ; at Westgate Hill, on the west of the moor ; and at the head of Warren Lane, along which part of the Parliamentary troops retreated towards Halifax. In the Mechanics' Institute at Adwalton a portrait of Lord Newcastle was placed some years ago, which is said to be the work of Sir Peter Lely. There is now little in the immediate surroundings of this historic scene which suggests

romance. The evidences of modern industrialism are strong on all sides, and their results are more apparent than the remains of picturesqueness which are still left in the smaller dales and valleys which shelve away from the high ground where Royalist and Roundhead fought.

At a short distance from Adwalton Moor, the traveller, turning gradually towards the head of the Spen Valley, through which the stream of that name makes its way southward to the Calder, which it joins at a point about half-way between Dewsbury and Mirfield, will find some interesting and picturesque country in the neighbourhood of Tong, Bierley, and Oakenshaw. The first-named of these places—the *Tuinc* of the Domesday Survey—is still, in spite of the fact that it is literally hemmed in by industrialism and manufacture, a charming and delightful village. The Hall, the seat of a branch of the ancient family of Tempest, was built by Sir George Tempest in 1702, and is a stately and handsome mansion containing many fine apartments, which are chiefly wainscoted in oak, relieved by some of the best examples of Gibbon's carving. There is here a very fine collection of portraits of famous personages, amongst them being those of Charles I., Prince Rupert, William III., and many of the principal Royalist leaders during the Civil War, together with a number of family portraits. One of the Tempests of Tong, John Tempest, who died about 1770, was the hero, or principal actor, in a romantic drama of real life which ended in a tragedy. Travelling in France with a friend of like wild habits with himself, they formed the acquaintance of two young ladies, inmates of a convent, and persuaded them to elope in their company to England. The two gallants provided a rope-ladder for the convenience of their flames, and this breaking at a most inopportune moment, the attention of the watch was aroused, and the whole party secured. It was then discovered that the lady who had been descending the rope-ladder at the moment it broke was dead, and matters assumed a serious aspect for the young squire of Tong and his companion. They were given the alternative of imprisonment for life or the payment of a very heavy fine, and in order to pay the latter John Tempest was obliged to sell a large portion of his estates and to heavily encumber the remainder. He died soon after his return from France, and the estates passed to his sister, who married Thomas Plumbe, a wealthy merchant of Liverpool. He redeemed the lost property, which is now in the hands of his descendants, who assumed the name of Tempest in 1824. Another Hall of some note in this district is that of Bierley, once the residence of Richardson, the famous botanist, which was built



THE STOCKS AT TONG

by his father in 1636. It was here that Richardson, after his years of study at Oxford and Leyden, settled down to a life of studious ease. No small part of his time would appear to have been spent in correspondence. A subsequent tenant of Bierley Hall, Miss Curren (whose name suggested to Charlotte Brontë her pseudonym of Currer Bell), issued a selection from Richardson's correspondence, the originals of which, comprising letters from Linnæus, Boerhaave, Lord Derby, Thoresby, Dillenius, Sir Hans Sloane, and most of the learned and scientific men of that time, filled twelve folio volumes. Miss Curren, who was a relation of Richardson's, was a woman of great taste and of rare attainments, and during her residence at Bierley she collected a library of 20,000 volumes, and formed very valuable collections of prints, fossils, and shells. Bierley Hall has undergone many alterations and restorations since it was first built, and the magnificent cedar of Lebanon, presented to Richardson by his intimate friend, Sir Hans Sloane, and which stood in front of the house, is now dead ; but there are still many interesting memorials of its former tenants about the place, and its natural situation overlooking the Spenn Valley is still bold and commanding.

Oakenshaw, at the head of the Spenn Valley, is now chiefly interesting for the existence of its Cross, a fluted column of some height, cut from one block of stone, and mounted on four terraces of steps. It is topped by a square shaft, forming four sun-dials, over which is a ruined weathercock, and its origin, which is undoubtedly ancient, is still a matter of conjecture amongst the local antiquarians. There are some curious traditions about Oakenshaw, now a purely modern industrial village, which seems to show that its inhabitants of the old days were a strange set of people. It is said, for example, that they so rarely combed their hair that an iron comb was chained to a tree in the street for the use of those going to church on Sundays. But the people of the Spenn Valley from Oakenshaw downwards have now no need to mourn over the shortcomings of their forbears. Although the woods which were once as beautiful as any in Yorkshire have long suffered from the contaminating influences of coal-dust from collieries and smoke from mill-chimneys, and the Spenn itself, instead of being pure and crystalline, is coloured with the various dyes which drain into it, the people who live hereabouts—the result of a mixture between Celtic and Norse blood—are sturdy, independent, progressive folk, who know how to make full use of their natural advantages. Their three principal centres of population, Cleckheaton, Liversedge, and Heckmondwike, are big, bustling places, with churches, chapels, public institutions, and well-built houses spreading over the hillsides. At Cleckheaton some of the most important inventions in the machinery necessary for the preparation of worsted and woollen goods were first brought out. There is here a notable place of worship known as White Chapel, which is mentioned in Saxton's Survey (1575). It was called "The Old White Chapel of the North" early in the

last century, and was probably rebuilt by Dr. Richardson of Bierley Hall about 1706. It was again rebuilt in 1821, and from the following year until 1871 it had as organist one Overend, who, though blind from the age of nine months, was a thoroughly capable musician, and the composer of many fine hymn-tunes. In the burial-ground of White Chapel several celebrities of the neighbourhood are laid, the most famous amongst them being Dr. Richardson, who was interred here in 1741.

From Liversedge and Heckmondwike the country shelves away in two opposite directions towards the banks of the Calder—one towards Brighouse, going westward, the other eastward towards Mirfield and the western outskirts of Dewsbury. Between the Spenn Valley proper and the sloping ground which terminates on the banks of the Calder at Brighouse, there is a considerable bank of high land on which stands Hartshead and the woods around Kirklees Hall. Of Mirfield and Brighouse it needs only to be said that they are typical small manufacturing towns, situated in what must once have been singularly romantic surroundings, and now bearing many evidences of prosperity. Here and there in their midst some trace of antiquity may be encountered, but the chief impression which they leave on the mind is one imprinted there by the tall chimney, the great mill, and the hurrying crowds of workers going to or from toil at noon or eventide, rather than of anything which takes the mind back to the days when where they now stand was wood or waste, and the Calder an untainted stream.

## III

Apart from the natural picturesqueness of the Spenn Valley and its immediate neighbourhood, it possesses a great attraction to the literary student in the fact that it has a close connection with the life and works of Charlotte Brontë. Patrick Brontë was incumbent of Hartshead for five years, and it was during his residence there that he was married to Miss Branwell, and that their daughters Maria and Elizabeth were born. Charlotte was at school at Roe Head, close by, some years later, and she afterwards acted as governess under the proprietress of the same school at Dewsbury Moor, to which place it had been removed. Oakwell Hall, a fine old house near Birstall, is the *Fieldhead* of "Shirley"; the Rydings, Birstall, the *Thornfield Hall* of "Jane Eyre"; Birstall itself is *Briarfield* in "Shirley"; Kirklees Hall figures as *Nunneley* in "Shirley," and as *Ferndean Manor* in "Jane Eyre"; Hunsworth Mills, near Cleckheaton, figure in "Shirley" as *Hollows* and *Yorke Mills*. It was from the Luddite riots in the Spenn Valley that Charlotte Brontë drew her material for the risings so realistically described in "Shirley," and the *Parson Helstone* of that work was the Rev. Hammond Roberson, vicar of Liversedge. With this corner of the country, then, Charlotte Brontë is particularly associated, and the lover of her works will find in it much to arouse his interest and enthusiasm.





THE GATE-HOUSE, KIRKLEES HALL

Hartshead, where Patrick Brontë was living at the time of his marriage, occupies a commanding position, surrounded by fine prospects of the neighbouring country, on an eminence gradually rising from the valley of the Calder near Brighouse. It is a small place, but its church contains some very fine Norman work, and there is a notable sun-dial of ancient make in the churchyard. Between Hartshead and the Calder lies Kirklees Park, one of the most picturesque country seats in Yorkshire, which has more than one tradition connected with it. Kirklees Hall was at one time a religious house, tenanted by Cistercian nuns, and it is said that Robin Hood here met his death through the treachery of one of the sisters, who bled him to death as he lay sick in her charge. His grave is still pointed out in the park, but the inscription which once appeared on it is now illegible, and those learned in such matters have often disputed the genuineness of whatever was there. The most familiar version of it is that which was found amongst the papers of Dr. Gale, some time Dean of York:—

Heaſt undernead diſ laitt ſtean  
 laiſ robert earl of Huntingtun  
 nea arcit her aſ hie ſa geud  
 an pipl kauld im robin heud  
 ſick outlawſ aſ hi an iſ men  
 biſ england niſr ſi agen.



THE RYDINGS, NEAR BIRSTALL

It was to Roe Head, a pleasant house just above Kirklees Park, that Charlotte Brontë came on January 19, 1831, and of those who then saw her for the first time none probably had the faintest idea that they were looking on one of the most remarkable geniuses of the century. Her first appearance was thus described by one of her schoolmates:—

“I first saw her coming out of a covered cart, in very old-fashioned clothes, and looking very cold and miserable. . . . When she appeared in the schoolroom her dress was changed, but just as old. She looked a little old woman, so short-sighted that she always appeared to be seeking something, and moving her head from side to side to catch a sight of it. She was very shy and nervous, and spoke with a strong Irish accent. When a book was given her, she dropped her head over it till her nose nearly touched it, and when she was told to hold her head up, up went the book after it, still close to her nose. . . .”

At Roe Head Charlotte Brontë remained for eighteen months, and it was no doubt during her residence there that she gained her first impression of the district which she afterwards described with such power. From her schoolmistress she learnt much of local history, particularly

of the wild doings of 1812, when the people revolted against the introduction of machinery. At Roe Head, too, she formed her friendship for Miss Ellen Nussey, who was closely connected with the district, and lived near Birstall until a few years ago. It was from Miss Nussey that Mrs. Gaskell obtained the letters of Charlotte Brontë which are printed in the well known "Life," and there was probably no one who knew more of Charlotte's true self, or of her most intimate thoughts, than she did. Miss Nussey was born at the Rydings, a picturesque house near Birstall, and lived during the later years of her life at Fieldhead, a little hamlet about a mile from the same place, and it was at Birstall that Charlotte used to visit her. That the great novelist's acquaintance with the district

and with the character of its people was deep, thorough, and intensely sympathetic, no close student of her work needs to be told.

Of the houses in this neighbourhood closely associated with Charlotte Brontë and her work, the most interesting from a picturesque point of view is undoubtedly Oakwell Hall, a fine old sixteenth-century mansion near Birstall, which is still in almost the same condition as when its first owners, the Batts, of curious memory, lived in it. It is a quaint place of irregular architecture, with a broad paved approach to the porch, a panelled hall and oaken staircase with a gallery around it, and at the rear an enclosure of



THE DOG-GATES, OAKWELL HALL

delightful shade, half court, half garden. It was built by Henry Batt in 1583, and its building seems to have been one of the most sensible things that person ever did, for there are others standing against his account which reflect little credit upon him. In 1601 Henry Batt used for his own naughty purposes certain money which a trusting vicar of Birstall had left with him for the building of a school. Not content with that he tore down and sold the great bell of Birstall, and reduced the vicarage to ruins; after which, one regrets to hear, he sat down in his fine new house at Oakwell and went unpunished of man. However, justice was meted out upon his successor, who was ordered, with all forthcoming owners of Oakwell Hall, to pay an annual fine by way of compensation for sacrilege. These Batts were a notable family. In one of the sleeping-chambers of Oakwell Hall they show a bloody footprint, which originated after this fashion:—About the end of the seventeenth century there was a Captain Batt in possession of Oakwell, and about the beginning of December 1684 he was away from home, being, in fact, in London. As it grew dusk on the 9th day of that month, Captain Batt was seen to walk up the sycamore avenue, enter the house, and go up to his room, there to vanish incontinently. After that no one was surprised to hear that at the very moment that his ghost walked into Oakwell Hall, Captain Batt was slain in a duel in London. Soon after this remarkable occurrence the Batts are heard of no longer in connection with Oakwell, which passed early in the eighteenth century into the hands of a sporting lawyer, one Fairfax Fearnley, who seems to have had a certain rough notion of wit and liberal ideas of hospitality. In September 1763 he and fourteen other gentlemen, amongst whom was Sir Fletcher Norton, his Majesty's Attorney-General, slew a stag and dined royally off it, after which they hung up the horns in the hall as a perpetual memento. Fearnley composed an epitaph on his huntsman, Amos Street, an ancient man of fourscore years, which was duly engraved on stone, and kept in readiness at the hall until its subject died, when it was erected over his grave in Birstall churchyard. According to the epitaph itself, old Amos often used to sit on his tombstone and endeavour to read his master's composition, from which one argues that however good a huntsman he may have been, he was but a poor scholar. All these and many other memories cling around Oakwell Hall, but none of them are so full of real charm as the fact that its ancient gables and old-world air caught the fancy and moved the genius of Charlotte Brontë.

## CHAPTER XXVII

### Huddersfield and the Valley of the Colne

HUDDERSFIELD IN HISTORY—ITS RISE AND IMPORTANCE AS A MANUFACTURING TOWN—ASPECTS OF HUDDERSFIELD—THE PARISH CHURCH—PUBLIC INSTITUTIONS—ALMONDBURY AND ITS CHURCH AND GRAMMAR SCHOOL—WOODSOME HALL—LASCELLES HALL : A GREAT NURSERY OF CRICKET—LONGLEY HALL—VALLEY OF THE COLNE—HOLMFIRTH—THE BORDER FROM LORD'S MERE TO RISHWORTH—BLACKSTONE EDGE—THE VALLEY OF THE RIBOURNE—RIPPONDEN—BARKISLAND—ELLAND.

#### I

**A**LMOST opposite the woods of Kirklees Park the river Colne, one of the principal tributaries of the Calder, winds away southward between rising hills which increase in precipitancy and wildness as they draw nearer the south-west border of the county. At first the Colne passes through a wide valley, with much level ground in its midst, but ere many miles have been traversed by those who follow it from its junction with the Calder to its sources amongst the solitudes of Lord's Mere, it becomes somewhat sharply enclosed by the surrounding hills, which rise above it in bold contours. Between Huddersfield and Almondbury the Colne is joined by a smaller stream, the Holme, which runs down from the high ground known as Holme Moss by way of Holmbridge and Holmfirth, gradually descending from a height of 1700 feet near the Derbyshire border to one of 300 feet at its junction with the Colne. The country which surrounds these two feeders of the Calder is singularly wild, rugged, and impressive, and must have been exceedingly savage in aspect ere it became as thickly populated as it now is. Standing on any considerable eminence in its midst, the traveller finds himself surrounded by vast stretches of mountainous country, far-reaching moorlands, and solitary vales and glens, which, though never far removed from the sounds and sights of industrial life, are still lonely and secluded enough to satisfy the desire of the most

exacting lover of solitude. This corner of the county, in short, lies amidst some of the most characteristic scenery of the Pennine Range, and though not so wild or majestic as the district including the Ingleborough groups of mountains, or so picturesque as the neighbourhood of the Peak of Derbyshire, it has a charm and a distinguishing character of its own which cannot fail to leave a strong impression on those who explore it.

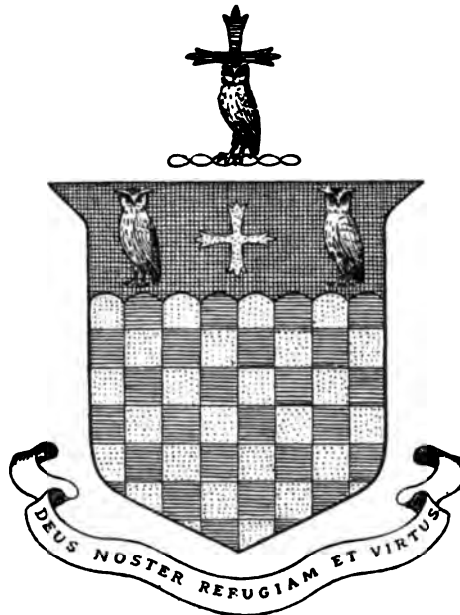
Huddersfield, one of the largest and most important of Yorkshire manufacturing towns, and second only to Bradford in the brightness and cleanness of its appearance, lies near the mouth of the Colne in a hollow formed by the surrounding hills. It is another marvellous example of the change which modern enterprise, the introduction of steam, electricity, and machinery, and the hundred and one labour-saving appliances of nineteenth century life can work within a comparatively short space of time. At the beginning of the present century Huddersfield, though described by the itinerants of that time as a busy and bustling place, had a population of only 8000 inhabitants; it is now about 100,000. It wears the aspect of a new town; in its wide and well-built streets, and in the immediate suburbs with their roomy villas and mansions, there are few traces of anything that is not quite modern. Huddersfield is nevertheless one of the most ancient towns in Yorkshire. Authorities have disputed whether the Roman station of Cambodunum was at Almondbury, on one side of the town, or at Slack on another; but that the Romans knew this district well and had an important station here has been abundantly proved. Some of the names in the neighbourhood, such as Colne and Cumberworth, go to show that after the Roman occupation came to an end, this part of the county was tenanted by the Cymri, and other place-names, Quernby, Kirkheaton, and Nether Thong, seem to argue the later presence of the Danes. As to the origin of the name Huddersfield, there appears no reason to doubt that it springs from the name of Uther Pendragon, father of Arthur, and that it was originally Othersfeld or Oderesfelt. As Oderesfelt, at any rate, it appears in Domesday Book, the compilers of which record that before the Conquest, Godwin, a Saxon thane, had here six carucates of land, employing eight ploughs, to be taxed. This same Godwin held it of Ilbert de Lacy at the time of the Survey, and it was then, like many other manors, waste ground. The wood pasture was a mile long and a mile wide. Of church or priest there is no mention, nor is anything said of a mill, but that there was a mill in Huddersfield, either then or very shortly afterwards, is evident from the fact that the De Lacys made a grant in respect of its repair. Their family held the manor for three centuries after the Conquest, and during that period did much to improve the condition of whatever folk then tenanted it. They established burgage tenure here, as they had already done, or were doing at their other manors of Leeds, Bradford,

Clitheroe, and other places, and there is no doubt that it was one or other of them who founded the first Huddersfield church, though of any distinct record of their connection with it there is small trace. But the church was in existence, and in the gift of the Prior and convent of Nostell, in 1216, and was valued at £9, 6s. 8d., and its vicarage at £6, 13s. 4d., when Pope Nicholas's Valuation was made in 1292. By the beginning of the fourteenth century the manor of Huddersfield had passed into the hands of the Earls of Lancaster by the marriage of Thomas Plantagenet, second Earl, to Alicia, last survivor of the De Lacys. The affair at Boroughbridge in 1322, which led to the execution of the great Earl of Lancaster in his own town of Pontefract immediately afterwards, caused the estates of his family to be forfeited to the Crown, but in 1333 the lands of Huddersfield were in possession of a Sir Richard de Birton, who left them to his son, John de Birton. Who had them after that the chroniclers do not relate, but that they once more came into the hands of the Crown (probably having been restored to the Earls of Lancaster after the Wars of the Roses) is proved by the fact that in August 1599 Elizabeth, through her officers, sold them to William Ramsden, in possession of whose family they have ever since remained.

With the name of Ramsden the history and fortunes of Huddersfield are closely identified. Ever since William Ramsden bought Huddersfield from the Crown it has been held by the Ramsdens, who were created Baronets in 1689. There is a local tradition strongly believed in, but which bears an air of non-veracity about it, that there is one house in Huddersfield which is not the property of the Ramsdens, and which its owner will not sell, even though his cellar should be packed with gold in exchange. Whether this is true or not does not affect the fact that until the Ramsdens bought Huddersfield it had shown very small signs of becoming the flourishing town which it is to-day. They, being most probably good business men, set about improving the condition of their purchase. There was little done during the first seventy years after they acquired the manor, but in the year 1671, as the result of an inquiry made the previous year, Charles II. granted to John Ramsden and his heirs the right to hold a weekly market at Huddersfield every Tuesday for ever, for the buying and selling of all manner of goods and merchandise, and to receive all and singular the tolls, privileges, emoluments, and advantages thence arising—which was a good thing for the Ramsdens, but a much better thing for the Huddersfield folk, who now had a chance of making money which they had never had before. After this trade began to develop, and when Daniel Defoe came a-journeying this way in 1727 or thereabouts, he found Huddersfield a place important enough to mention. According to him it was then the chief market-town of the district, and people visited it from considerable distances. Its trade was chiefly in woollen goods, which were manufactured in the villages round about and brought into the town to sell on market-days. Defoe noted a

fact which has struck other itinerants both before and since his time, namely, that oatmeal is a staple article of diet, either in the form of oat-cake or porridge, in this district, and that Huddersfield people keep very good ale. Further benefits were conferred upon Huddersfield by the Ramsdens in 1768, when Sir John Ramsden built a Cloth Hall for the accommodation of the buyers and sellers. It was a circular brick building of considerable size, and had a cupola in which was suspended a clock and bell whereby business hours were regulated. This Cloth Hall was further enlarged by the next baronet in 1780, and about the same time a canal was made, named the Ramsden Canal, which connected Huddersfield with the recently im-

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THE ARMS OF HUDDERSFIELD

Cooper Bridge. gave a great trade of the town, veloped when the of constructing Huddersfield to Lyme, and thus munication with Liverpool, was construction of very difficult, and money were eighteen years work was in pro-difficulty lay in through the hills Range, but this plished at Stan-Marsden and tunnel being be-four miles in out of hard mill-

the making of these canals Huddersfield was put in communication with the seaports on both coasts, and her commercial affairs naturally grew in quantity and importance. The introduction of machinery at the beginning of the present century led to much disturbance, but the people speedily discovered that it had a beneficial effect upon labour, and its use led to a rapid increase of population. As the town grew its institutions grew with it. New churches and chapels were built, literary and scientific institutes arose, a Chamber of Commerce was founded, new mills and manufactories sprang up, the railways came into the town, and the modern Huddersfield appeared, no doubt much to the amazement of the old folk who remembered it under its previous conditions. In 1832 it was enfranchised, and



empowered to send one member to the House of Commons, and in 1868 it was made a borough. And, finally, while a hundred years ago its trade was almost entirely confined to one class of woollen goods—the manufacture of kerseymeres—it now makes in vast quantities cloths, broad and narrow, flushings, serges, and cords, and has large dealings in fancy goods made from silk, worsted, and cotton.

The parish church of Huddersfield, dedicated to St. Peter, occupies a good position in the centre of the town, and is well worth the notice of a traveller, though it is practically a modern building, having been last rebuilt in 1836. The first church here, which doubtless owed its origin to the De Lacys, who were great church builders, is said—it is a matter of pure conjecture—to have been erected in 1073 by Walter de Lacy in fulfilment of a vow made when he fell into a bog or morass on the wild ground between Huddersfield and Halifax. It was a small church in the Norman style, and had a spire. In 1506 it was rebuilt and enlarged. The present church is in the Perpendicular style, and consists of a nave and aisles, with a tower and chancel, and a transept on the south side with east and west aisles. The tower, which stands at the west end of the church, is buttressed at the angles, and has a parapet with crocketed pinnacles at the four corners. Abutting on the north side of the chancel is a vestry, which being built in the form of a hexagon somewhat resembles the chapter-houses of minsters and cathedrals. The interior of the church is well kept, but contains little of note, the glass being principally modern and the mural monuments also. One of the vicars of Huddersfield was Henry Venn, who held the living from 1759 to 1772, and who is better known as the author of "The Complete Duty of Man." There are several other churches in Huddersfield, most of which owe their origin to the munificence of private individuals. Holy Trinity Church was built and endowed by Mr. B. H. Allen in 1819; St. Thomas's Church was the gift of the Starkey family; St. John's Church, which is very finely situated, and was designed by Butterworth, was built and endowed by Lady Ramsden in 1853; and St. Andrew's Church was erected by subscription on land given by Sir John Ramsden in 1870. In addition to its churches Huddersfield possesses numerous Nonconformist chapels, some of which are of very good architecture. The architecture of the town, indeed, is uniformly excellent. The traveller who arrives in Huddersfield by way of the railroad cannot fail to be struck by the proportions of its principal station, an imposing building in the Grecian style, with a massive portico supported by Corinthian pillars. Nor will he fail to admire the warehouses, which, like those of Bradford, are often of palatial style and proportions, and might well be taken to be the abodes of merchant princes, rather than the depositories in which their goods are stored. The Cloth Hall dates from its original inception of 1768, but the Town Hall was only opened in 1881. The Market Hall, opened in 1880, is a Gothic building surmounted by a spire 106 feet high. Other note-

worthy specimens of architecture are the Technical Schools, the Theatre—once the Philosophical Hall—the College, and the Infirmary. Huddersfield is well furnished with parks and open spaces, and being a keen sporting place, like most of the larger Yorkshire towns, it possesses a very fine cricket ground and a commodious football ground. It has an excellent service of trams, which are worked by the Corporation, and no town or city in Yorkshire excels it in providing its inhabitants with every modern convenience and improvement in transit, sanitation, and lighting. Although it is in a geographical sense shut out from all the rest of the world by the high hills which surround it, Huddersfield is a striking example of the way in which industry, perseverance, and the seizing of every chance will transform a village into a great town.

## II

About two miles out of Huddersfield in a southerly direction the ancient town or village of Almondbury stands on the summit of a hill nearly a thousand feet above sea-level. It is, so far as situation and aspect go, one of the most remarkable places in Yorkshire, and it is also one of the most interesting to lovers of history and archæology. From its situation it is to the surrounding country as a city set upon a hill, and a view of it from the south and east is not merely striking but absolutely magnificent. Once upon a time Almondbury had Huddersfield as a part of its manor; now it is included in the parliamentary borough of Huddersfield, and is practically joined to that encroaching town. It is one of the most extensive parishes in the West Riding, and has a history going back to the time of the Roman occupation. It was at one time held to be the *Cambodunum* of the Romans, but subsequent investigation has shown that this opinion was erroneous, and that the true site of that station was at Slack, near Outlane, a few miles away across the valley of the Colne. Camden mentions this theory in his *Magna Britania*, wherein he speaks of Almondbury as “a little town standing upon a high and steep hill which hath no easy passage or even ground unto it but on one side,” and of perceiving there “some ruines of walles and a castle, which was garded about with a triple strength of forts and bulwarks.” He speaks, too, of Almondbury as a flourishing place under the Saxon kings, and of its having had a cathedral, built by St. Paulinus, and dedicated to St. Alban, from whence he argues that the place was first called Albanbury, and that the name was subsequently altered by corruption to Almondbury. The true derivation of the name seems to be largely a matter of conjecture, though there is a certain plausibility in the contention that it comes from *Altus Mons*, a high mound or hill, and *burgh*, a strong place. That there was some species of Roman station at Almondbury seems to be proved from the fact that Roman coins and remains have been discovered there, but there are practically no records of its early existence until the time of the Domesday Survey, when, like Huddersfield, it belonged to Ilbert de

Lacy, and was waste. Its value in the time of Edward the Confessor was £3, and Chetel (an English vassal of Ilbert de Lacy) and Sweyn had four carucates of land, accommodating as many ploughs, to be taxed. Its wood and pasture was the same in size as that of Huddersfield—a mile long and a mile broad. In 1130, according to the chroniclers, Stephen built a castle here and confirmed it to Henry de Lacy, and seven years later there was an enquiry at the newly-built stronghold as to the treatment of certain prisoners who had been confined there in a dungeon. Edward I. granted a market-charter to the De Lacys for the benefit of Almondbury in 1272, to be held on Monday in every week. The church was probably founded by one of the De Lacys, but whether on the site of the cathedral said to exist previously or on a new site there is nothing to show. Records of presentations to the rectory made by the De Lacys in the thirteenth century are still extant. According to one local authority parts of the present church were built about 1100 by some of the principal families of the district, and the structure as it now stands, allowing for subsequent repairs and alterations, was finished about 1522. The rectory reverted to the Crown at the time of the Dissolution, but the vicarage had previously, in 1488, been endowed with the small tithes, and the Deed is in the Consistory Court at York.

There are few churches in Yorkshire which are better worth examination or more interesting even to the unlearned in such matters than this of Almondbury. It stands in an elevated position in the middle of the village, surrounded by a graveyard of considerable size. Its massive tower is 70 feet in height, and is battlemented and buttressed, and there are gargoyles of grotesque shape at the top of each buttress, and crocketed pinnacles at each corner of the battlements. The nave is long and lofty, and its clerestory has five square three-light windows on either side, and is surmounted by an embattled parapet. The aisles, north and south, rise to the clerestory, and have each large windows, in three compartments, in the Perpendicular style, those on the south side being higher and of a more ornate character than those on the north. The chancel, which formed the original church, has north and south chapels, continued from the aisles, and all are battlemented and adorned with crocketed pinnacles and ancient grotesques. The present south porch is comparatively new, but the doorway within is of great antiquity, and appears to have been part of the original church. It forms an arch in the Early English style, and its ornaments are much worn. Over the door of the south chapel there is an ancient sun-dial which bears the inscription, *Ut Hora sic Vita*: 1682. The interior of the church is particularly impressive. The windows contain some very fine ancient and modern glass work. There are three ancient oak-screens at the entrances to the chancel and the side chapels, and in the latter and in various other parts of the church there are numerous notable monuments of the principal families of the neighbourhood, many of whom have vaults beneath the flooring.

There is a very curious inscription in Old English characters at the end of the nave, which is said to have been written by one Geferay Doyston in 1522, but which is much more likely to have been the work of John Skelton,



and to have been copied by the said Geferay. One of the most noticeable features of the interior is the number of coats-of-arms emblazoned in the windows on the tombs and carved on the corbels. Of monuments, brasses, and tombs the church is full, and the lover of quaint epitaphs might here fill his note-book without exhausting the supply placed before him.

The parish registers of Almondbury church are full of remarkably interesting entries. Its vicars appear to have been anxious to hand down to succeeding generations full particulars of whatever uncommon event happened in the parish during their incumbency. The following extracts, taken at random from the registers, will serve to show how careful their keepers were to record any event which caused a stir in the parish :—

*October 1559.*—William Brigge, ye son of Jeferaye, of Helme, was drowned ye xx day of October at Park Mylne, as he and one Humphrey Armitage comed over at a Hebble or narrow Brygge. A tempest of wynde blew hym sodenly into the water; for because off great rayne yt fell ye daye and night before, the water was greate, and so by that means he was drowned and his fellow saved. They were both with one Myles Wyilson, a taylier by occupation, and his servants.

*February 1568.*—Richard Hyrste, of Myenser Brygge, commynge from Halifax markett, on Satyrdaye ye xij<sup>o</sup> daye of Februarie, was through a greate snowe left and stopped—the dryfte of snowe was so very greate, and beyng alone all Satyrdaye nyghte, perished and died on Lynlaye Moore, not farre from a crosse called Hayghe Crosse, and was found on the morrow after, his horse standyng bye hym, *evenharde by hym*, and was brought home to his own house, and buryed at Almonburye, Munday, ye xiii<sup>o</sup> daye off Februarye—and Elizabeth, the daughter of George Harpyn, an infant, with him.

*June 1569.*—Jennett, ye wiffe off John Marsden, by soden mischance ye xxii daye of Julye (*sic*) slipped off a brigge as she was bowne to mylke, or as she comed from ye pastrie, the water beyng up by ye reason off rayne ye night and in ye morninge, and was drowned and found agayne about one off ye clock and was buried ye xxiii of Julye.

*March 1575.*—Agnes, ye wyffe of Richard Littlewodde, off Oldfelde, by ye instigation of ye devell; within xiiii days that she was delivered off childe; ye xiiii daye of Marche, about or before midnight, rose out off hyr chylde bedde, privilie went to a little well not half a yarde deepe off water, and drowned herself, and was buried ye xvi day off March.

*December 1594.*—Elizabeth, wife of John Eastwood, on the eve of the 5th, at 7 o'clock, was cruelly killed with an axe, as it was suspected by Oliver Hurste, a neighbour, and the Coroner's quest going on her; then buried the Tuesday after, being the x day; that was four or five days after she was killed. And much money, about v or vi pounds, taken out, and for the same money slain piteously to see.

The Almondbury which the traveller sees to-day is a village of considerable size, which really consists of two long streets of stone houses, Northgate and Westgate, at the angle formed by the meeting of which stands the church. In both these streets and in some of the smaller approaches to the village there are some quaint and venerable houses of the well-built, sturdy type so common in this district, where winds and storms

descend upon the countryside with fierce vigour. Some of these houses, the timbered fronts of which add greatly to their picturesqueness, have histories of their own almost as long and as interesting as that of the village of which they form a part. They were the manor-houses of the old families of the neighbourhood, whose monuments and armorial bearings are to be seen within the church, and whose names still prevail in the neighbourhood. Certain names in this district occur over and over again in the registers during the long period of history covered by the latter, and are still extant as those of the principal families. Wormall's Hall, in Westgate, was the manor-house of the family of that name; Pentice End, an ancient stone and timber building, was identified with the family of Eyre; Fenay Hall, down the steep incline from Almondbury to Fenay Bridge, one of the most interesting and picturesque houses in the neighbourhood, was the manor-house of the Fenays, whose pedigree goes back to the thirteenth century; the Oaks was the residence from the fourteenth to the sixteenth centuries of the Rockleys, and afterwards for several generations of the Mellers. Of the history of all these old houses and of the families who lived in them, and of the folk-lore which has gathered about them, whole volumes might be written without exhausting the subject.

Almondbury is somewhat famous in Yorkshire for its Grammar School, a foundation which has been generally credited to the account of James I., but which in reality owed its inception to the Kayes of Woodsome Hall, close by. In an ancient MS., once existing at Woodsome but now no longer in evidence, there occurred this passage, quoted by Canon Hulbert in his "Annals of Almondbury":—"Arthur Kaye's ancestors buylded a Chappell of old Tyme, in the lane above the Butts at St. Elyn well. About pmo Edw: sexti he and I (the writer of this MS. was John Kaye, son of the Arthur named in it) dyd shift yt, and by consent of the Parish dyd *translate* the same into the Scole House, that now is, and I dyd p'cure one Mr. Smith, a good Scholar, to come and teach there." The letters patent of James I. are dated 1609, and give power to establish a Free Grammar School at Almondbury for the bringing up of children and youths in Grammar and all Good Learning. There was to be one Master and one Usher, and six honest men, chosen from the most wise and discreet religious persons within the Parish, who were to act as Governors. Some of the provisions are quaint and curious. The works of Popish, Profane, and Immodest Authors were to be zealously kept out of the curriculum, lest the scholars should be infected with erroneous and immoral doctrine. Nothing but Latin was to be spoken by the Master to those boys able to converse in that tongue. Corporal punishment was enjoined, but it was only to be moderate in its nature. Poor boys were to be taught Latin and Greek free of all charge, but in return they were required to get moss to lay on the roof of the school, and to do some other menial offices. Boys unable to read the Psalter, or afflicted with an infectious disease, or

incapable of learning, were not eligible for admission. The school hours were from seven in the morning until five in the afternoon all the year round. Most significant of all is an entry which states that barring out the Master is forbidden. Of late years Almondbury Grammar School has been rebuilt and reconstructed, and it is now to all intents and purposes a modern institution conducted on present day principles.

Of the principal country houses in the neighbourhood of Huddersfield that known as Woodsome Hall, the seat of the Earl of Dartmouth, is the most notable. It occupies a very fine situation on the slope of a richly-wooded hill, a little way out of Almondbury, and is altogether one of the most charming residences in the county, notwithstanding the fact that it is so closely adjacent to a great manufacturing town. Its gabled front, rising from a terrace enclosed from the lawn by a balustrade, commands extensive views of the undulating landscape stretching away to the eastward. The house consists of a central hall flanked by gable projections, and is in the Elizabethan style. The stone porch in the centre, which is furnished with sedilia of the same material, bears date 1600, and the room erected over its arch has another date, 1644, on the apex. Everything about the house, whether of its exterior or interior, bears evidence of great antiquity. The great hall within is a lofty apartment some ten yards square, with a gallery for minstrels on the east side, and many ancient matters in the shape of pictures, cabinets, and armour. Over the fireplace are the names of Arthur Kay and Beatrix Kay, carved in letters a foot high, and between them an escutcheon which quarters the arms of Kaye and Finchenden. The portraits preserved here are of singular interest. They are chiefly of the Kaye family, and bear some very curious legends. One represents Arthur Kaye, with branches proceeding from his loins, bearing as fruit the heads of his sons and daughters and their progeny, with these lines beneath :—

*Fructus Wodsoniæ domus.*

Here Arthur lies in quiet rest,  
Who justly delt and none opprest,  
This tree too sprung out of his brest,  
His fruit, o Christ, that follow The be blest.

Another very interesting family portrait is that of the wife of John Kaye, beneath whose presentment are the following verses, which depict

*Vita uxoris honestæ.*

To live at home in howswyverie,  
To order well my famylye,  
To see they lyve not Idillye,  
To bring upe childrene vertuislye.  
To relyeve poor foulk willinglye  
This is my care with modestye  
To leade my lyfe in honesty.

There are various other objects of interest and curiosity in Woodsome Hall, which is further said to be haunted by the ghost of one Rimmington, a former occupant. For many generations the seat of the Kaye family, the Woodsome estate came into possession of the Earls of Dartmouth early in the eighteenth century, by the marriage of George, Viscount Lewisham, eldest son of the first Earl of Dartmouth (William Legge, keeper of the Privy Seal and Lord Justice of Great Britain during the reign of Queen Anne) to Elizabeth, sole daughter and heiress of Sir Arthur Kaye.

Another house of interest in the Huddersfield district is Longley Hall, one of the seats of Sir John Ramsden, Bart., the lord of the manor. It is neither so ancient nor so picturesquely situated as Woodsome Hall, and its chief interest lies in the fact that it is closely associated with the Ramsden family, whose head for the time being at any period during the last three centuries must have been able to reflect with considerable pride that almost everything his eyes fell upon in looking from its windows was his own property. The William Ramsden who bought Huddersfield from the Crown is described by a local antiquarian as a very clever man who did much to raise his family in the world. After the dissolution of the monasteries he made such extensive purchases of abbey and priory lands that an order was issued forbidding further sale to him. At that time his list of purchases filled two double-column folio pages in the Index of Grants in the Augmentation Office. The Ramsdens were incorporated amongst the gentry at the Heralds' Visitation of Yorkshire in 1585, and arms were assigned to them at the same time. The baronetcy was created in 1689, and the present holder of the title is the fifth baronet. The original house at Longley was erected in the Tudor style, and was probably built round three sides of a courtyard, but this was replaced during the last century by a plain house which was improved and added to about fifty years ago, when a number of coins of the period of Charles I. were discovered in making excavations.

Across the valley from Almondbury on the spur of a long hill running eastward the traveller will find a curious little hamlet named Lascelles Hall, which in one respect is much better known all the world over than any town or village in its neighbourhood. It is so small a place, and has so few distinguishing features, that it would be no difficult thing to miss its presence altogether in viewing the countryside from any of the surrounding hilltops, and it is not easy to believe that one is really within the boundaries of a village when the steep hill which leads to it has been surmounted. Lascelles Hall is merely a collection of a few stone houses, square, stolid, and substantial, perched on a hillside, with a long stretch of breezy ground above. There is nothing in its appearance to betoken its fame, and yet it is known all over the world of sport as perhaps the most famous nursery of cricket which the cricket world has ever possessed. Not a few cricketers have climbed the steep hillside roadways from the



valley in order to look at the stretch of turf, with its humble pavilion in the corner, whereon so many kings of cricket have learnt the mastery of bat and ball. At one time the words Lascelles Hall and Yorkshire were almost synonymous, so far as the county cricket of the broad-acred shire was concerned, and though the little weaving village is not so pre-eminent in cricketing matters as it used to be, no cricket enthusiast of the nineteenth century will ever forget that it gave to Yorkshire and to England some of the best all-round cricketers who have played for either, or that on two occasions it encountered the full strength of its own county, and proved that an insignificant hamlet could hold its own against the resources of the three Ridings.

### III

The river Colne and its co-tributary the Holme, which divides from it at a point somewhat south of Huddersfield, enclose between them some of the wildest scenery on the south-west borders of Yorkshire. The level of the Holme in the valley near Honley is about 400 feet; at Holmfirth it is over 700 feet, and at Holme Moss its various sources spring from a district varying from 1700 to 1900 feet above sea-level. In times of heavy rain the Holme is naturally a wild and turbulent stream, and on more than one occasion during the past two centuries its rising and overflowing have wrought death and destruction to life and property along its course. In 1738 there was a flood which forced its way into the church of Holmfirth during the celebration of divine service. In 1777 occurred what was for a long time known as the Holmfirth Great Flood, which was so disastrous in its effects that a public subscription was made for the reimbursement of sufferers and property owners, who are said to have lost £10,000 on this occasion. There was a minor flood in 1821, but its only effect was to send people fleeing to their top chambers or to the high ground behind their dwellings, and to keep them up all night in fear and trembling lest worse things should befall them. After that there was peace between the waters and the valley for a generation, but in 1852 came the great catastrophe of which folk in these parts still speak with bated breath—the bursting of the Bilberry reservoir. Fifteen years previously an Act of Parliament had been obtained for the erection of certain reservoirs on the streamlets emptying themselves into the Holme. One of these, the Bilberry reservoir, stands at the head of a narrow valley leading from Holme Bridge to the high spur known as Good-Bent, and into it run two considerable streams, one coming from Holme Moss, the other from Wessenden Head. This reservoir at the time of the disaster of 1852 enclosed a basin covering seven acres of ground, and was formed by an embankment stretching across the valley, 340 feet in length and 90 in height. It is said that the Commissioners who had charge of the working of this vast body of water had allowed the bye-wash to become stopped up, but however that

may be, it is certain that on a bright moonlight night in February 1852 the embankment gave way, and the water rushed down the valley in a mighty wave which those who saw it describe as magnificent in its grandeur. It swept away the mills at Bilberry and Digley with a rush, and poured upon Holme Bridge Church, washing away the walls and trees of the churchyard, and leaving within the church a coffin which with many others



LOOKING SOUTH-WEST FROM NEAR SLAITHWAITE

it had torn bodily from the graves. At Hinchliffe Mill forty persons were swept away and drowned; at Holmfirth, where the houses come closely down to the river banks, bridges, factories, and houses were submerged or destroyed, and the flood swept on into the wider stretches of the valley, bearing with it all manner of *debris*, machinery, timber, trees, mingled with the bodies of men and cattle. In this flood eighty-one persons lost their lives, and the losses of property owners amounted to at least £100,000, £70,000 of which—the amount needed to reimburse the actual sufferers—was speedily raised by public subscription.

The scenery in the neighbourhood of the Holme is wild and romantic in the extreme, and the whole district at the beginning of the present century was practically out of the world, so cut off was it from communication with outside places. Holmfirth itself, a town given up to the manufacture of woollen goods, lies in a valley surrounded by hills reminiscent of Swiss mountain scenery. Its parish church, of ancient foundation, but rebuilt in 1778, possesses a spire of some height, which,

however, is quite dwarfed by the houses rising in terraces on the hillsides beyond it. None but the strongest and most agile can explore this district with any comfort. The roads are steep, and wind about at all manner of angles, and are sometimes more suggestive of precipices than of highways. The traveller will observe the number of Castle Hills which present themselves to his notice in the neighbourhood—there is that of Almondbury, with its ancient and modern buildings boldly outlined against the sky, and that of Upper Thong, where there are traces of a Saxon fortification, and yet a third across country at Upper Denby—all three being about 1000 to 1200 feet above sea-level. It is said there was another Saxon fortification at Kirkburton, and that there is some ground for the legend is proved by the fact that the little stream which runs by the church there is called Old Saxe Dyke, and that the church contains some fragments of an ancient Saxon cross, found in the chancel wall about thirty years ago.

Of the notable things along the valley of the Colne between Huddersfield and the high ground on the Derbyshire border there is nothing so interesting to the archæologist as the site of the Roman station of *Cambodunum*, which appears without doubt to have occupied the present position of the hamlet or village of Slack, a little distance from Huddersfield on the west side of the town. The first discovery of Roman remains at this place, which was on the Roman road between *Deva* (Chester) and *Isurium* (Aldborough) took place in 1736, when an altar was found and placed in the yard of a farmstead, where it seems to have been allowed to remain for some years without its presence there being announced to those learned in such matters. It was found in this position in 1757 by Watson, the Halifax historian, who gives the following account of the matter:—"When I was examining the course of the Roman way in 1757, I chanced to see this altar standing in a farmer's yard, and desiring to be shown where it was found, was conducted to that part of the station where not only three stone walls centre, but also three lordships. Having had this curiosity for some years in my own possession, I presented it at last to the Rev. Mr. Whitaker, who in his 'History of Manchester' has given the public an engraving of this and another stone found here, which I also gave him, with the word *OPUS* upon it. The reading in the altar I take to be '*Fortunæ Sacrum, Caius Antonius Modestus, Centurio Legionis Sextæ Victricis, Posuit et votum Solvit,*' that is, 'Sacred to *Fortuna* (the goddess), *Caius Antonius Modestus*, Centurion of the Sixth Roman Legion, placed in fulfilment of a vow.' It was discovered in 1736, amongst the ruins of a building manifestly composed of Roman bricks, many of which are yet to be seen in the common fence walls there. I measured one which was seven inches and a half square, and three inches thick, but was informed that bricks had been dug up there twenty-two inches square. One room in this building, according to the report of some workmen who destroyed it, was four yards long and about two and a half broad, but betwixt three

and four yards below the surface of the ground paved nearly a yard thick with lime and bricks brazed together extremely hard. In one corner of this room was a drain about five inches square, into which as much water was conveyed as would have turned an over full well, yet no vent could be discovered." During the present century numerous further discoveries of an important and interesting nature have been made at Slack. The



RISHWORTH MOORS

Rev. J. K. Walker discovered the remains of a Roman hypocaust, consisting of a large mass of cement; seven tiers of pilasters, with seven pilasters in each tier; the roof of a furnace of square stones and Roman bricks; and a series of flues, closely cemented. In 1865 further investigations were made by the Huddersfield Archæological and Topographical Society, with the result that the foundations of a large building were uncovered, the walls of which measured externally 60 feet in length by 54 feet in width. They were 2 feet in thickness, and were laid upon a course 3 feet 6 inches in breadth, and intersected by several cross walls. During the progress of these researches four additional hypocausts were unearthed, from which discovery it was surmised that this particular building had been the public baths of Cambodunum. In the following year a sepulchre was unearthed, and numerous coins discovered, chiefly of the time of Vespasian (A.D. 70-79), and Nerva (A.D. 96-98).

Few better methods can be employed by the traveller who desires to gain a general idea of the scenery and character of this corner of Yorkshire,

than that of following the highroad which leads from Huddersfield along the Colne valley and over Stanedge until he reaches Delph, near the border, where he should turn to the right and follow another highway, running alongside the Lancashire border, until he comes to the edge of the Rishworth Moors, over which he will, if he be an adventurous man, and not without some liking for exploration, find a way to the inn at Blackstone Edge. From this famous pass, 1290 feet above sea-level, he may follow the highroad into the valley of the Ribourne, descending all the way until he comes to Ripponden, lying 800 feet below. Here he will encounter a climb of some 600 feet to Barkisland, whence he will drop gently down through West Vale to Elland in the valley of the Calder. An excursion of this description, however, is not to be lightly undertaken at any time by the pedestrian, for it means hard walking and stiff climbing at all periods of the year, and the encountering of such winds and storms in winter as are like to overawe the stoutest heart. When Taylor, the Water Poet, was wandering about this part of the country, he thought himself in a break-neck land, so steep and tedious did he find the ways. Daniel Defoe, who approached Halifax by way of Blackstone Edge and the valley of the Ribourne, and found that he occupied a whole day in travelling eight miles, remarks that the only way discoverable was one which had a precipice on one hand, and uneven ground on the other, and that the character of the country was so awe-inspiring that it made the horses uneasy and frightened the dog. The character of the country hereabouts is little changed since Defoe's day: no railway will ever scale the heights of Blackstone Edge, or invade the solitudes of Rishworth Moors.

The scenery along the valley of the Colne grows wilder as the traveller proceeds further towards the border. At first there are abundant evidences of human life on both sides of the valley. Longwood and Golcar (a curious modern corruption of the ancient Guthlacscar), Linthwaite and Slaithwaite, are all places where human bees are busy in their hives. But as Marsden, lying at the foot of a hill rising to a height of nearly 1700 feet, is reached the scenery becomes increasingly wild. The hills hereabouts are not romantic or picturesque—they are, rather, bleak, bare, and savage, and perhaps all the more impressive because of their lack of poetry. A short distance beyond Marsden that marvel of engineering, the Stanedge tunnel, pierces the hill-chain, the canal passing through one arch, the railway through another. It is more than three miles in length, and somewhat of a trial to railway passengers; what it must be to the canal-boat folk may be left to the imagination. The highroad winds in and out over it, and from the highest point the traveller may gaze on the valley from which he has slowly toiled upward, and on the broad expanses of Clowes Moss on one side and Lord's Mere on the other. All around this elevated position are traces of long-dead days, when Angle and Celt were in the land. Ingle Edge, on the eastward, was the Angle boundary;

Marsden, the boundary valley ; Dobcross and Saddleworth (where there are some ancient houses) were Roman stations, and beyond the latter are remains going back further even than the time of the Roman occupation, in the shape of the Druidical stones near the house known as Bill o' Jacks. All along the edge of the county, going between Delph and the Rishworth Moors, the scenery is equally wild and impressive, and on the Yorkshire side there are few signs of human life, while the moors are an absolute solitude, wide stretches of land which appear to be forsaken of all life but that of the birds and creatures inhabiting them. One feature of these moors the traveller will not fail to observe, especially on those lying north-west of Blackstone Edge, and that is the presence of numerous reservoirs which shine like mirrors for miles away.

At Bailing's Gate, on the highest point of Blackstone Edge, the traveller is on the borders of Lancashire and Yorkshire, and may if he so pleases set foot upon both counties at the same time. He is also standing on one of the most conspicuous heights in Yorkshire, the dark, frowning form of which may be seen at long distances. Far below him in the valley of the Ribourne lies Ripponden, and on his way thither he is not likely to lack company, for the road he treads was a principal highway between Yorkshire and Lancashire long before Daniel Defoe, his uneasy horses, and his frightened dog, came trembling along it in a snowstorm, and has continued to be so, despite the fact that the railway which bears the name of the two counties has long carried men and merchandise along the innumerable curves up the valley of the Calder. There is another highroad going away from the top of Blackstone Edge towards Mytholmroyd, which passes the wild bit of country known as Turvin Holes, and drops down into Cragg Valley, and is well worth exploration, as, indeed, every road and lane in this district is. Innumerable stories might be told of the country hereabouts—stories of adventures on the moors, of highwaymen, of flood and storm, of ghosts and poachers, of strange oddities, and of old-world doings full of the rare charm of the antique. Tales or no tales, the traveller will find plenty of food for thought as he goes downhill, having rested at the Derby inn, towards Ripponden, which lies, almost buried out of sight, deep down amongst the hills. There is little to note at Ripponden save the evidences of manufactures and the strength of the stone houses, some of which are ancient and picturesque. A goodly bridge of stone crosses the Ribourne near the church, and beyond it the traveller finds himself at the foot of a road locally known as Ripponden Bank, up which, by many a twist and turn, he will climb, lifting himself some six hundred feet within a distance of a mile. No one but an accomplished pedestrian will do this with absolute equanimity, not even for the sake of the wide prospects which meet the eye at the extreme summit of the hill. But there is ample compensation to the enthusiast in those prospects and in the presence of Barkisland, a quaint little hamlet of picturesque stone houses, in the midst



TURVIN VALE

of which an artist might sit down and find material for his sketch-book for days together.

In Barkisland and its immediate surroundings the traveller, if he concerns himself at all about the names of various houses and small estates, will be struck by the frequent use of the word "royd" as a termination. In Barkisland alone, a small place, too, there are ten "royds;" in Norland, an adjacent village, there are seven; and in Wadsworth, a neighbouring township, there are ten. All around this part of Yorkshire, indeed, the word is extraordinarily common, not merely as the termination of a place-name, but also as part of a personal name, as Murgatroyd, Akroyd, Oldroyd. "Royd" means ground "roided" or cleared—for example, Lingroyd, the ground cleared of ling; Akroyd, ground cleared of oak; Ellenroyd, ground cleared of elder-bushes, commonly called ellen-trees in this neighbourhood. Now and then the prefix indicates the sort of ground cleared, as Stonyroyd, Clayroyd, Rawroyd (raw = rough), and sometimes the owner of the ground, as Hanroyd, Milnerroyd, and Ibbotroyd; while again it occasionally indicates the situation, as in Murgatroyd (the "royd" on the "gate" (= way) to the moor); Knowlroyd (the "royd" on the knoll) and Netherroyd (the "royd" below the hill).

From Barkisland the traveller may descend, easily and comfortably, towards Elland, in the valley of the Calder. On this portion of his journey he will find no vast solitudes, but from any part of the road he may gaze upon the outlines of the hills beyond the valley and on the moorlands which come up to their edges. Ere the present century came with its vast increase of trade and manufacture, the valleys and glens between Barkisland and Elland were no doubt solitary places enough—nowadays the mill lifts its roofs and tall chimneys to the sky from the heart of most of them. Elland itself, romantically situated enough, is now a modern manufacturing town, very different to the small township which Cooke saw when he made his inspection of it previous to writing his itinerary of 1812. At that time he remarked of Elland and Halifax what Leland remarked of Hedon in connection with Hull, namely, that the development of the larger town was taking away all the trade from the former. Since his time, however, Elland has asserted itself, and probably has no more care for what the folks of Halifax may do or say than for the opinions of a South Sea Islander upon the manufacture of cloths. Nor (so full of business-like qualities is it, and so resolutely bent on keeping abreast with the times) has it any particular pride in the fact that it is one of the most ancient places in the valley of the Calder, and possesses a church which is only second in point of age to the mother-church of Halifax.



## CHAPTER XXVIII

### Halifax and its Surroundings

HALIFAX: ITS NAME AND SITUATION—EARLY RECORDS OF THE TOWN—  
HALIFAX IN MEDIÆVAL TIMES—THE GIBBET LAW OF HALIFAX—DEFOE'S  
VISIT TO HALIFAX—HALIFAX DURING THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY—  
THE INCREASE OF MANUFACTURES—MODERN HALIFAX—THE PARISH  
CHURCH—ENVIRONS OF HALIFAX—MIDGLEY MOORS—HEBDEN BRIDGE  
—HEPTONSTALL—THE MOORS AND THE LANCASHIRE BORDER—HARD-  
CASTLE CRAGS—TODMORDEN.

#### I

**H**ALIFAX, like its sister towns of Leeds, Bradford, and Huddersfield, is a striking example of the fashion in which the improvements and inventions of the nineteenth century have transformed small and comparatively insignificant places into great and important centres of population. A hundred years ago it was a town of limited dimensions, having a population of about 8000 persons, who lived in narrow and irregular streets clustering about the ancient church—to-day it is a busy and crowded place, with a population of close upon 100,000 inhabitants, who are surrounded by every convenience and luxury in the way of transit which modern ingenuity can devise. Travellers who approached the town a century ago and went about it and its environs during their stay in it, had doubtless good reason to complain of the difficulty of getting about, for there are few towns in England which can boast, or deplore, such steep streets and winding ways as there are in Halifax. But where the coaches used to toil into the town from south and west, or descend carefully from the north and east, the electric cars now run as smoothly and rapidly as if they were traversing level ground instead of rolling over gradients stiff enough to dismay the heart of the stoutest pedestrian. Daniel Defoe, if he came shivering over Blackstone Edge and so by the valley of the Ribourne to Halifax, would not recognise the town which he visited a hundred and sixty years ago. Modern Halifax is a revived place—a town of new buildings, new houses and mansions, new

streets ; it is only here and there that one comes across bits of the ancient Halifax, which must indeed have been one of the quaintest and most curious towns of the north.

Around the origin of the name of Halifax the learned in such matters have held many disputations. When Camden came to the town seeking materials for his *Brittania*, somebody told him that the original name of the place was Horton, and that Halifax was a new name, springing from two Anglian words, "Halig" (holy) and "Fax" (hair). He was further informed that the name of the town was changed from Horton to Halifax for the following reason:—There was at one time in the parish a young woman who was charming enough to attract a certain monk, who so far forgot his vows as to make advances to her. She very properly rejecting them, the monk wreaked his vengeance upon her by cutting off her head. What became of the monk seems not to have been particularised by the mediæval narrators of this remarkable history, but the maiden's head was hung up in a yew tree, and ere long was regarded as having the power to work miracles. The common people, who had plenty of time in those days to cultivate their innate love of superstition, very soon got into the habit of making pilgrimages to the Halig-Fax, and so the place where it hung was no longer called Horton but Halifax. All of which entertaining history is utterly erroneous, and gives one the impression that some Halifax man of Elizabeth's day took Camden to be a credulous setter-down of old wives' tales. Halifax was called Halifax in various documents of the Norman period, and instead of being a comparatively modern place, as Camden says it was in his day, it was then one of the oldest towns in the West Riding. There is nothing whatever to show that it was ever called Horton. Some authorities trace a connection between the name of the town and the face of St. John Baptist, which, or a portion of which, used to be preserved as a relic in the parish church, and there is some colour in this, for the church is and always has been dedicated to that saint, who is said to have wandered to this corner of England and preached here under a thorn tree. But the name of the town has in all probability sprung from its situation. It was the town on the *Hale-veg*, road in the hollow—and any one who takes a comprehensive view of the situation of Halifax will see that here is a reasonable derivation. Halifax in its ancient state lay entirely in a hollow, with great hills rising up on almost every side : in its modern state part of it is still in the hollow, and part, or parts, on the rising ground beyond. It is not a picturesque situation, but it is a singularly striking and impressive one, and a general view of the town from the summit of Beacon Hill, an eminence rising to the height of several hundreds of feet above the valley in which the older part of Halifax stands, creates a picture which will not soon be forgotten by whoever sees it.

Of the early history of Halifax there are few records, and those which exist are very fragmentary. There is no mention of the town in Domes-



BEACON HILL, HALIFAX

day Book, but there are entries there concerning several townships of the parish. There seems no doubt that when the Survey was made Halifax was part of the manor of Wakefield, which stretched from Normanton to Lancashire, and included within its boundaries no less than 118 towns and villages. This manor belonged to the Crown, and had been the "king's land" in the time of Edward the Confessor. It was given by William the Conqueror to his son-in-law, William, Earl of Warren and Surrey, whose successors held it until 1347. During the troublous times of the next two centuries the manor of Halifax was chiefly in possession of the Dukes of York. During the reign of Henry VIII. it became the property of Thomas Cromwell, Earl of Essex, and afterwards of Anne of Cleves, from whose hands it passed into the keeping of a local family, the Waterhouses, who held it for some time ere it came into the possession of Sir Arthur Ingram in the days of Charles I. Of its history under the Earls of Warren there are very few particulars to be had, and these are chiefly obtainable from the muniments of the Priory of Lewes, to which religious foundation one of the Earls presented the church and living of Halifax about the beginning of the twelfth century. From these documents it would appear that the clothing trade was then in operation in the town. When Pope Nicholas's Valuation was made, during the reign of Edward I., the yearly value of the parish church of Halifax was £93, 6s. 8d., and of the vicarage £16,

and this proves that there must have been a considerable population in the place. A very curious document, quoted by Watson in his history of the town, and purporting to be written by John Waterhouse of Shibden in the year 1556, gives some interesting particulars of the population in his day. He says that there were then in Halifax twenty and six score (520) householders, whereas less than a century before there had only been thirteen. Reckoning five persons to each house this would show an increase of population during one hundred years of over 2500 persons. This was probably due to the extension of the staple trade of the town, which is known to have made great strides during the sixteenth century. One local historian, Wright, says that the woollen trade was brought to Halifax from Ripon, the latter town not having such advantages as the former possessed in ready access to coal and water, while another tradition says that it was introduced into the town from Devonshire. Around all these matters hang very considerable mists of obscurity which also shroud much that one would like to know of the mediæval history of Halifax. Upon one matter, however, the chroniclers have not failed to enlighten posterity. In the fourteenth century—probably about 1347—there came into existence in Halifax a form of criminal jurisdiction known afterwards as the Gibbet Law, which had so many features of a curious nature about it, that local historians and topographers took care to write down as much concerning it as they omitted to state of equally pertinent matters. Of the history of the Gibbet Law a considerable volume might be written: the following summary, however, will serve to show how severe was the jurisdiction under which folk lived in Halifax in those days:—

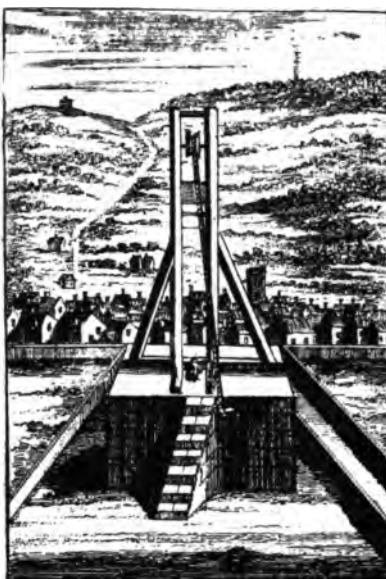
The district immediately surrounding the town of Halifax was known during mediæval times as the forest of Hardwick, which constituted a Liberty of its own, and was bounded on the west by the Lancashire border, on the north by the parish of Bradford, on the east by the Hebble, and on the south by the Calder. Within these bounds there were eighteen towns and villages, Halifax, Ovenden, Illingworth, Mixenden, Bradshaw, Skircoat, Warley, Sowerby, Rishworth, Luddenden, Midgley, Errinden, Heptonstall, Rawtenstall, Stanfield, Crosstone, Langfield, and Wadsworth. All these places were more or less concerned in the manufacture of cloth, but particularly Halifax, and when the increase of trade began the merchants found that they suffered severely from the depredations of thieves, who pounced upon the cloth exposed upon the tenters, and escaped to the wilder parts of the Forest. These depredations becoming more and more serious, power was given to erect a court at Halifax for the summary trial and execution of all offenders apprehended. The court consisted of the bailiff of Halifax, four jurymen of the same town, and four jurymen from the townships in which the offence under question was committed. The law on the point was clear and concise, simply providing, *That if a felon be taken within the liberty of the Forest of Hardwick, with goods stolen out or within*

*the said precincts, either hand-habend, back-berand, or confessioned* (having goods in hand or confessing to their theft) *to the value of thirteen pence halfpenny, he shall after three market-days, or meeting-days, within the town of Halifax, next after such his apprehension and being condemned, be taken to the gibbet, and there have his head cut from his body.* At first confined to the crime of stealing cloth from the tenters (hooks on which it was stretched for exposure), this drastic measure was afterwards enlarged to the inclusion of all manner of thefts, and that it was very freely used for some three centuries is evident from the entries in the registers. The methods of putting it in force seem all the more savage, because of their deliberate formalities. "Immediately after the Apprehension," says a writer who published a quaint account of the Gibbet Law of Halifax, "the Felon is brought to the Lord's Bailiff in *Halifax*, who by Virtue of the Authority granted unto him by the Lord of the Manor, of *Wakefield*, under the particular Seal appertaining to that Manor, keeps a common Jail in the said Town, and therein detains the Prisoner till his Tryal. In order whereunto the Bailiff at the Complaint of the Prosecutor issues out his Summons to the Constables of four several Towns, within the said Precincts, to require four Freeholders of each Town, as members of the said Forest, to appear before him at a certain Day, that then and there they may make a Jury to examine such matters of Fact, as shall be alledg'd and brought before them. At the Time of their Appearance, both the Felon and Prosecutors are plac'd before them Face to Face; and if the thing stol'n be Beast or Horse, or any thing of that kind, 'tis produc'd to view; but if it be a thing Portable, it is laid before them in the Room where they are assembled: And if upon examination they find, that the Felon is not only guilty of stealing the Goods then laid or being within their view, but that the said Goods are of the Value of thirteen Pence half-penny, or more, then is the Felon adjudg'd by the said Jury to be beheaded, according to ancient Custom. But if upon Examination the Criminal is not found guilty of the Felony, or if he be, and the things stol'n amount not to the Value of thirteen Pence half-penny, he is acquitted and set at Liberty, paying his Fees. . . . After the Felon had been found guilty and declar'd so by the Jury, he was not put to Death instantly, but confin'd in Prison for about a week; not only that he may have Time to prepare for his latter End, but also to expose him openly to the World: For there being one general Market Day in the Week, and two other Days of more than common *Stirrings* the Felon was on every one of these Days set in the public Stocks, with the Goods he had stol'n on his Back, if he could carry them, but if not they were plac'd before his Eyes, that all Passengers might see them. And this was done in Terror to others, that they might take warning by his wicked Deeds, never to commit the like. After he had been thus handled for about a Week, he was brought by the Lord's Bailiff to the Place of Execution, the Scaffold now standing at this Day. There was a peculiar Engine formed for the Purpose,

the Figure whereof may be seen in Bishop Gibson's [edition of] Camden's *Britannia*. In this Engine the Ax (which is yet to be seen at the Bailiff's House) was drawn up by a Pulley, and fastened with a Pin to the Side of the Scaffold. If it were an Horse or Ox, or any other Creature that was stol'n, it was brought along to the Gibbet, and fastened to the Cord by a Pin that stayed the Block so that when the Time of Execution came (which was known by the Jurors holding up one of their Fingers) the Bailiff or his Servant, whipping the Beast, the Pin was pluck'd out, and Execution done ; but if it was not done by a Beast, the Bailiff or his Servant cuts the Rope. 'Tis supposed that this Punishment has been the Cause of the Beggars putting this Town into their Litany : from *Hell, Hull, and Halifax*—Deliver us. The first of these," concludes this amusing author,

"they may be thought to fear least, because of their wicked lives ; *Hull* they pray against, because they meet with Correction, the best Charity ; as also they do at *Halifax*, where Theft, which they use so much, meets with so quick a Punishment."

The earliest records of executions under the Gibbet Law of Halifax have long been lost, but there is no doubt that this terrible machine, which was closely akin to the *Maiden* of Edinburgh and the *Guillotine* of France, was responsible for the deaths of a considerable number of offenders previous to 1538, in which year a register began to be kept in the parish church. After that year the executions were frequent, and are recorded in the registers by the simple method of adding at the end of the entry the significant word *Decollatus*. There were twenty-five executions during the reign of Elizabeth, several women being amongst the sufferers, and a similar number took place during the first half of the seventeenth century. The last persons to suffer death by this barbarous custom were John Wilkinson and Anthony Mitchell, who, being found guilty of stealing nine yards of cloth valued at 9s., and two young horses valued respectively at 48s. and 60s., were gibbeted on April 30, 1650. Public feeling against the further continuance of this fashion of administering justice seems to have been aroused about this time, for soon after the last execution, the Bailiff appears to have had it intimated to him that if any further executions took place they would be at his own peril. At the beginning of the present



THE GIBBET

From Camden's "*Britannia*"

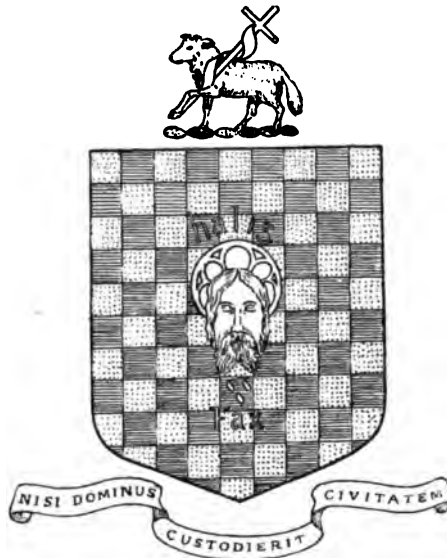
century the stone platform whereon the gibbet was erected was still standing in the neighbourhood of the present Gibbet Lane, and the axe was for a long time preserved in the house of the Lord's Bailiff.

## II

During the reign of Elizabeth, Halifax became quite a flourishing town, and its population increased by leaps and bounds. Camden, who was travelling hereabouts between the years 1575-1580, thought that there were then in the parish at least 12,000 inhabitants, and that his estimate was not far from being correct is proved by the fact that in certain documents still extant, the householders of Halifax parish about the middle of the sixteenth century are given at 8500, and that it had at least 3000 men ready to take the field if need arose. It must be remembered, however, that the ancient ecclesiastical parish of Halifax was of very wide extent, and if not absolutely the largest, was one of the largest in the kingdom. Until 1576 the rectorial or great tithes of the parish had been enjoyed, first by the Prior and convent of Lewes, and afterwards by the Waterhouses, into whose hands the property of that community had fallen, but in that year they were commuted by Act of Parliament. In 1585 Elizabeth founded the Free Grammar School at Halifax, though it does not appear that the Halifax people owed her any particular thanks for what she then did, for the endowment was provided by the town and parish, and the land given by the Earl of Shrewsbury and Edward Savile. A charter of incorporation for the establishment of a public workhouse for the accommodation of the destitute poor was granted to the town by Charles I. in 1639, on the petition of Nathaniel Waterhouse, who gave a house to be used for the desired purpose. This charter appointed thirteen governors of the workhouse, who had full power to make laws for its conduct, and further to enter any suspected premises and search for idle vagabonds, ruffians, and sturdy beggars, whom they were to place in the workhouse and correct after the good and wholesome laws of the realm of England. Soon after this the folk of Halifax were engaged in taking arms against the king, as most of the larger towns of the north did. One Hodgson, of Halifax, though a civilian, and previously untrained in warlike arts, shared the Parliamentary command in this neighbourhood with Sir Thomas Fairfax and General Lambert. After the battle of Adwalton Moor the Royalists occupied Halifax for a time, but were speedily driven out, and from that time onward the Parliamentarians appear to have had the upper hand in the town without further questioning by their opponents. Hodgson raised a regiment of volunteers in Halifax and joined the main Parliamentary army, and he and his men showed such skill and bravery that they were selected by Oliver Cromwell to lead the attack at Preston in 1648.

When Daniel Defoe came to Halifax in 1727, he found that it had got

over all the troubles and difficulties attendant upon the Civil War, and had vastly increased in wealth and population since the time of Camden's visitation. He states that since the Revolution of 1688, the trade of Halifax had been greatly encouraged and increased by the demand for kerseys wherewith to clothe regiments serving abroad; and the effect upon the population had been such that he estimated the number of people dwelling within the borders of the vicarage of Halifax to have increased one-fourth between 1680 and 1720. He also remarks that of late years the Halifax manufactory had been new sort of cloth, of which, he says, they were turning out at that time every year. This new trade, he was informed, had not interfered with the trade in kerseys, and that he heard of one man alone who traded by commission for three-score thousand pounds (£60,000) a year. Of the manners and customs of the Halifax people at that time Defoe gives a highly interesting and picturesque account. There were three market-days during the week then, and the town was crowded on each, but especially on Saturday, when the great market was held. The Halifax people, he remarks, got their corn from Lincoln, Nottingham, and the East Riding; their black cattle and horses from the North Riding; their sheep and mutton from the adjoining counties on all sides; their butter from the North and East Ridings; and their cheese from Cheshire and Warwickshire. He speaks of the prodigious number of black cattle sold in Halifax at that time during the later months of the year, and accounts for it as follows:—



THE ARMS OF HALIFAX

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“This demand for beef is occasioned thus: the usage of the people is to buy in that season (Autumn) beef sufficient for the whole year, which they kill and salt and hang up in the smoke to dry. This way of curing their beef, keeps it all the winter, and they eat their smoked beef as a very great rarity. Upon this it is ordinary for a clothier that has a large family to come to Halifax on a market day, and buy two or three large bullocks from £8 to £10 apiece; these he carries home and kills for his store, and this is the reason that the markets at all those times of the year are thronged



with black cattle, as Smithfield is on a Friday, whereas all the rest of the year there is little extraordinary sold there. Thus one trading manufacturing part of the country supports all the countries round it, and numbers of people settle here as bees about a hive."

The development of the position of Halifax as a manufacturing town noted by Defoe at the beginning of the eighteenth century, considerable and noteworthy as it was, was as nothing to the development of the next century and a half. In Defoe's time the trade of Halifax was much hampered by lack of means of communication, and it was not until 1757 that the movement for the improvement of the Calder began to take practical effect. Even then the difficulties to be overcome seemed at first insuperable. Smeaton, who began the work of making the river navigable, laboured for some years without success, and it was not until the aid of Brindley, the famous engineer of the Bridgewater Canal, was called upon, that the project came to a definite conclusion. Even then the greater part of a century was consumed in overcoming the engineering difficulties. It must be remembered that Halifax is one of the most elevated towns in England, occupying a position several hundred feet above sea-level, and that to carry a canal to it was a work of great difficulty. Some notion of the magnitude of the task faced by Smeaton and Brindley may be gathered from the fact that the rise of the canal which they made, going towards Lancashire from Halifax, is 280 feet between Sowerby Bridge and the summit of the Pennine Range, from whence its fall is nearly 440 feet to the Irwell near Manchester. The rise in the connecting canal between Sowerby and Halifax, about  $2\frac{1}{2}$  miles in length, is 100 feet, and the entire system therefore is necessarily crowded with locks. It was not fully completed until 1829, about which time railway communication was established between the principal Yorkshire and Lancashire towns. Meanwhile another result of the development of the trade of Halifax had arisen in the new Piece Hall, a vast building (still standing near the Parish Church in the lower part of the town, but now used as a vegetable market) intended for the convenience of buyers and sellers of goods. A previous Piece Hall had been built by the lord of the manor, Viscount Irwin, in 1708, but this soon became inadequate, and in 1780 a movement was initiated amongst the merchants for the erection of a new one. This building, which is well worthy a visit of inspection, is in the form of an oblong square, covering 10,000 square yards of land, and is built on a slight slope, so that one-half of it is three stories in height, and the other two stories. It contains 315 separate rooms, opening on the ground floor from a colonnade which runs all round the square, and on the upper stories from a piazza of similar dimensions, both being supported by pillars of various styles of architecture. Here the makers of cloth used to expose their goods for sale on market days, and some of their names still remain on the doors, though the building has not been used for its original purpose for some years.

The original staple trade of Halifax was the manufacture of woollen goods, which began most probably in the fourteenth century, and had attained to considerable proportions by the time of Henry VIII., but there are now quite a large number of industries flourishing in the town, and the making of kerseys and shalloons has developed into the manufacture of the additional goods known as cashmeres, orleanses, coburgs, merinoes, lastings, alpacas, damasks, baizes, broad and narrow cloths, muslin-delaines, fancy cloths, and some minor articles of similar nature, while there is also a great trade in the making of carpets. When the Prince of Wales visited Halifax in 1863 for the purpose of opening the new Town Hall, he was conducted over three typical Halifax manufactories, the carpet works of John Crossley and Sons, the worsted mills of James Akroyd & Son, and the card-making works of John Whitley & Sons, all of which have a special connection with Halifax trade and with the fortunes of the town. The names of Crossley and Akroyd have the same relation to Halifax which those of Lister and Holden have to Bradford, and that of Salt to Saltaire. John Crossley, the original founder of the great carpet-making firm, was born in 1772, and was apprenticed to the carpet-weaving trade. He was engaged in various partnerships from 1800 to 1830, when he and his three sons, John, Joseph, and Francis, purchased the carpet business of Messrs. Abbot, and began to build up the world-famous establishment known by their name. When John Crossley died in 1837 the firm was employing only 300 hands; in 1870 it had 5000 people at work in its enormous mills at Dean Clough, and was making carpets, rugs, mats, tapestry, velvet, and similar articles. Of the fortunes made by the Crossley brothers, of their share in the public life of their native town and of the country, and of their magnificent benefactions and widespread charities, it is impossible to speak save in general terms. Wherever the traveller goes in Halifax he is confronted by memorials of their generosity in the shape of hospitals and asylums for the poor, orphanages for children, and similar institutions—of their private benefactions the world will never hear. A history of manufacturing progress closely akin to that of the Crossley family is found in that of the Akroyds. The founder of the firm bearing that name was James Akroyd, the successor of a long line of yeomen. With his brother Jonathan he began about 1770 the manufacture of the goods known as "Little Johns" and "Amens," the first being calimancoes, lastings, and wildbores, and the latter figured stuffs originally made at Amiens. With his two sons he founded the firm of James Akroyd & Son, and began a career of great success. His son James introduced power-looms into Halifax in 1822, and built a fire-proof mill about the same time. He used the first Jacquard machine ever seen in Yorkshire, setting it up in his factory in 1827. Chiefly owing to his inventive genius and perseverance the firm bearing his name introduced various novelties into the list of Halifax manufactures, the following list of which is given in James's "History of the Worsted Manufacture":—Plain and

ribbed calimancoes, lastings, prunelles, 1798; Serges de Berri, shalloons, Russells, wildbores, 1803; moreens, says, duroys, 1811; bombazetts, 1813; bombazines and Norwich crapes, 1819; camlets, taborines,

fancy Russells, dobbies, 1829; damasks, 1824; French merinoes and full twills, 1826-27; French-figured damasks, 1834; Alpaca figures, 1836; and figured Orleans in 1836-40. The history of this firm, too, shows how hand-labour was superseded first by the spinning-jenny, then by the power-loom, and finally by the combing machine. In the stories of the Crossleys and the Akroyds no little of the real history of modern and industrial Halifax is bound up. While their inventions and ingenuities had been going on the town was growing out of all knowledge. In 1821 its population was 14,064 persons, in 1871 it was 65,124. In 1832 it was made a parliamentary borough, returning two members to the



House of Commons, and in 1848 it was incorporated as a municipal borough. In 1863 it built its Town Hall, a fine building designed by Barry (whose last work it was), and erected at a cost of £60,000. During the whole of the present century Halifax has been transforming

itself from an old-world place to a very modern one, and there are ancient folk still left in it who remark from time to time that their surroundings are wonderfully altered.

## III

Of the public buildings in Halifax the parish church, dedicated to St. John the Baptist, is without doubt the most important and the most interesting. Its aspect and proportions are very fine and impressive, and would be much more so if the church occupied a more commanding position. It stands on shelving ground near the brook which runs through the older part of the town, and is almost entirely hidden from view on the town side by the tall warehouses lying between it and the principal streets. Its surroundings are somewhat bare and cold, and though the church itself is cathedral-like in its proportions, there is nothing of the quiet charm of a minster-close in its graveyard, which is simply a great square paved with tombstones, lying flat upon the ground and closely packed together. If it stood on higher ground, and were surrounded by trees and smooth green lawns, the parish church of Halifax would form one of the most imposing ecclesiastical pictures in the county—under its present somewhat sombre surroundings it is a church of much interest and of dignified appearance. Outwardly it is much discoloured by the smoke of the town, but the interior is full of beauty. About 200 feet in length and over 60 feet in breadth, it consists of nave, chancel, aisle, and two chapels on the south side. There is a legend that a church was consecrated here by Paulinus about the same time that he preached at Dewsbury, and the exact origin of the present edifice is largely a matter of conjecture. It was in all probability founded by the Earls of Warren and Surrey, and in its present form dates from the reign of Henry I. It has since then undergone various restorations and alterations, and was entirely rebuilt twenty years ago under the direction of Sir Gilbert Scott, at a cost of £16,000. The interior contains several matters worthy of notice, and notably the ancient font, the Rawson monuments in the south aisle of the nave, which were executed by Westmacott, the chancel screen of carved oak, and the curious wooden figure supporting an alms-box near the door of the south porch. Near the end of the north aisle there is a board, affixed to the wall, on which have been secured a number of the old brasses formerly fastened on the pews in token of ownership, and the inscriptions on some of these are quaint and interesting. One records that *This Pew is the Property of Mrs. Sarah Nicholls and Thos. Macaulay, Esq.*; another that this is *Mr. Michael Gibson's Pew, Purchased with Robert Tillotson's farme in Ovenden, 1709*; a third that *These seats are the property of W<sup>m</sup>. Griam, Esq<sup>r</sup>. the two uphirmost belong to Kilchingman, the other two to Dean Farm*. The belfry contains fourteen bells, some of them of very ancient date. The church of All Souls, on Haley Hill, which may be seen from

the graveyard of the parish church, is well worthy a visit of inspection on account of the beauty of its architecture and its internal decoration. It was erected by a member of the Akroyd family about 1859 at a cost of £70,000, and is built from designs by Sir Gilbert Scott in the style of the later thirteenth century. It consists of nave, aisles, transepts, and chancel, with north and south chapels, and its tower and spire rise from the north-west angle to a height of nearly 240 feet. The ornamentation of the interior of this church is particularly rich and elaborate, and lavish use has been made of granite, marble, and alabaster in carrying out the scheme of decoration. There is some fine modern stained glass in the windows. Square Church, the principal Dissenting place of worship in Halifax, forms a conspicuous object from the approaches to the railway station, over which its tower and spire, elaborately crocketed, rises to a height of over 230 feet. This building, which was built in 1857 at a cost of £16,000, is a very good example of the more florid style of the Decorated period, and its east window, which is 36 feet high, and contains some very good tracery, divided into seven lights, is especially noticeable amidst the elaborate ornamentation of the rest of the building.

During recent years much that was picturesque and antique in the appearance of Halifax has disappeared before the necessities of modern progress. The curious open spaces known as Bull Green and Cow Green, with their old-fashioned houses and gables, have been altered considerably, so far as their ancient appearance is concerned, by the erection of new buildings, and the centre of the town is very largely quite new. During the past thirty years Halifax has been entirely remodelled—markets and arcades, new shops and warehouses have been built, and much of the old town pulled down to make room for them. The Grammar School, at Heath, on the borders of the town, was once an interesting survival of the old days,

but it has been entirely rebuilt, and nothing remains of the Elizabethan building but a curious window, and a lectern fashioned out of one of the ancient beams. At one time Halifax possessed several very interesting and picturesque inns, but many of the oldest have been pulled down, though one, the Old Cock, still remains, and is one of the best show-places of the town. It contains some very fine



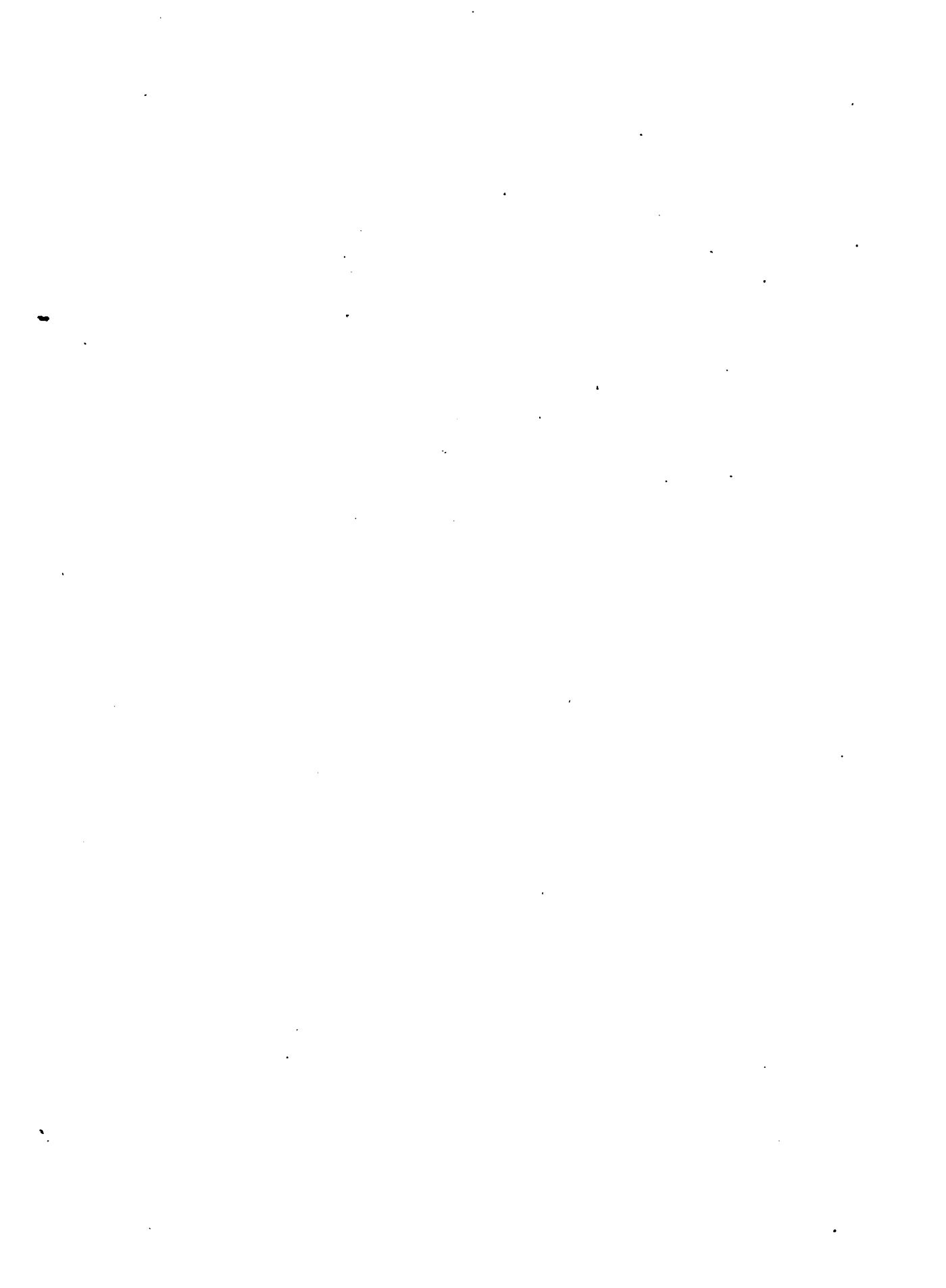
HEATH HALL



Interior of St. Felix's Church  
John P. R. R. R.

old oak panelling, and its dining-room and the staircase approaching it are beautiful examples of an antique interior. The modern buildings which have replaced the ancient are largely of a practical and useful order of architecture, but some of them are of considerable pretensions to elegance and style. The Town Hall, designed by Barry, and opened by the Prince of Wales in 1863, is a mixture of the Gothic and Classical styles of architecture, but it, like the parish church, suffers from its position, and is dwarfed by the neighbouring buildings. There is a very striking Grecian portico, raised on a pediment, in front of the Infirmary, and another of four columns at the Oddfellows' Hall. To the traveller, however, the most notable things in the way of architecture in Halifax will undoubtedly be the mills, and especially those of the firm of Crossley at Dean Clough, which cover several acres of ground, and give employment to thousands of workpeople.

One of the most striking features of modern Halifax is the provision made for the housing of poor folk, for the bringing-up and education of orphans, and for the provision of open spaces for the people. With all these three beneficial matters the name of Crossley is closely identified. One set of almshouses, or hospitals, well-built amidst pleasant surroundings, was erected and endowed by Sir Francis Crossley in 1855; another, larger in extent, was built and endowed by Joseph Crossley in 1863, and enlarged by him in 1870. An older institution, the Waterhouse Hospital, was rebuilt in 1856 by the successors of Nathaniel Waterhouse, its original founder, who was a great benefactor to the town during the first half of the seventeenth century. The magnificent pile of buildings rising at the edge of Savile Park and known as the Crossley and Porter Orphan Home, owed its inception to the munificence of the Crossley family, who began its erection in 1857. It was completed in 1864, and the cost of its erection was £56,000, which was entirely defrayed by Francis, Joseph, and John Crossley, who further endowed it with the sum of £3000 a year. A further endowment of £50,000 was made to it by Thomas Porter, of Manchester, some years ago, and his name was then added to that of the Crossleys. This institution, one of the most successful in the north of England, provides lodging, clothing, board, and education for about five hundred children of both sexes. Inmates must have lost both parents, or their father, and they are maintained and educated for six or seven years. Other gifts of the Crossley family to their native town were on a like scale of princely generosity. The People's Park was presented to the town by Francis Crossley at the time that he was member of Parliament for Halifax. Its expanse of over twelve acres of ornamental grounds, terraces, lakes, fountains, and lawns was designed and laid out by Sir Joseph Paxton at a cost of £40,000. Sir Francis Crossley also gave £10,000 to the Halifax Infirmary, and devoted a like sum to establishing a Loan Fund for the benefit of young tradesmen starting in business. Of benefactors Halifax has had a singularly rich supply during









*NEAR THE SOURCE OF THE CALDER.*

the present century, and few towns have so many proofs of the fact. John Abbott gave £60,000 to various local charities, the Akroyd family devoted large portions of their wealth to the town in which it was made, and Savile Park, a wide stretch of moorland from the edge of which there are magnificent views of the valley of the Calder and of the Pennine Range, was presented by the lord of the manor, Henry Savile. In addition to this and the People's Park there are two other parks in Halifax on the north side of the town, Shrogg's Park, opened in 1877, and Haley Hill, once the residence of the Akroyd family, and purchased by the corporation in 1887.

Halifax has given not a few famous men to the country, not only in the worlds of commerce and invention, but in those of art and letters. Robert Copley, Bishop of Lincoln, commonly called Grostète, sprang from the old family of Copley of Copley, where he was born about the end of the twelfth century. According to Camden, he was very severe in his treatment of his clergy, incredibly learned in letters and language, a staunch lover of truth, and given to quarrelling with the Pope of Rome, whom he terribly reprov'd on several occasions. Robert Farrar, Bishop of St. David's, who was burned at the stake at Carmarthen in 1555 under the Marian persecutions, was born at Halifax of an ancient family living at Ewood. John Lake, Bishop of Chichester, one of the seven bishops who were put on trial during the reign of James II., was born here in 1624, and educated at the Free Grammar School. He served for four years in the Royalist army during the Civil War, and was lecturer of Halifax parish church in 1647, and Vicar of Leeds in 1661. John Tillotson, one of the most famous Archbishops of Canterbury, was born in the parish of Halifax in 1630. His father, Robert Tillotson, was a clothier at Sowerby, in which township the future Archbishop was born, in a house standing on the way-side from Halifax to Rochdale. He was sent to school at Colne, and was admitted as a pensioner to Clare Hall, Cambridge, in 1647. He took his bachelor's degree in 1650, his master's in 1654, and his doctor's in 1666, and was elected to a Fellowship in the first-named year. He was a curate in Hertfordshire in 1661-62, and was then preferred to the living of Keddington in Suffolk. In 1664 he was chosen Preacher of Lincoln's Inn; in 1669 he was made Canon of Canterbury, and Dean in 1672, and in 1689 he became Dean of St. Paul's. After the Revolution of 1688, the refusal of Sancroft to take the oath of allegiance to William III. left the Archbishopric of Canterbury vacant, and it was conferred upon Tillotson, who was highly esteemed by the new king. Tillotson died in 1694, and was buried in the church of St. Lawrence Jewry, where there is a monument to his memory. More eminent even than Tillotson, perhaps, was Henry Savile, afterwards Provost of Eton College, who was one of the famous Saviles of Bradley Hall, in the parish of Halifax, where he was born in November 1549. He proceeded to Merton College, Oxford, about 1563, and took his Bachelor's degree in 1565, being soon afterward elected to a

Fellowship. He was Proctor of the university for a while, and in 1578 travelled extensively on the continent. On his return he was appointed tutor in Greek to Queen Elizabeth and Warden of his own college. In 1596 he was made Provost of Eton, where he abode until his death in 1621, and where he is buried under a sumptuous marble tomb. He was knighted by James II. in 1604. "He is justly memorable," says a local chronicler of the last century, "for two Things: 1. His excellent Edition of *St. Chrysostom* in Greek. 2. His Foundation of two Mathematical Professorships at Oxford. As to the first of these he put himself to the charge of eight thousand Pounds to collect Copies of that Father from all parts of the World, and employ'd learn'd Men to make some Notes on divers parts of his Works; which, when he had finished, he printed at his own Charge in Greek only, not doubting but that his Labour and Expense would be very acceptable to the learned." It was somewhat of a pleasant coincidence that Henry Briggs, a Halifax man, should have been one of the first Savilian Professors at Oxford. He was born at Warley in 1556, and soon after Savile had founded his mathematical chairs at Oxford, he and Briggs happened to meet, and fell casually into a discussion, which the latter conducted so well as to confute some theory which Savile had put forward, "which so pleased the Knight that he chose him one of his Readers of Mathematics, to both of which he gave a liberal Maintenance." It used to be said that Daniel Defoe was born at Halifax, and it is confidently claimed by local historians that he spent much time in the town, and wrote "Robinson Crusoe" there. It was at Shibden Hall, a quaint old-world building a little way outside Halifax, that Sir Thomas Browne lived for some time, practising as a physician, and it was during his residence there that he occupied his leisure in writing *Religio Medici*.

#### IV

The immediate surroundings of the town of Halifax are distinguished by the picturesqueness and wildness of their situation, and by the extensive prospects of hill and moor which may be obtained from their loftiest eminences. Northwards of the town the traveller finds himself passing into the midst of some of the most striking scenery in Yorkshire. The district lying between Halifax and Haworth, going northward, and between the high road connecting these two places and the line of the Lancashire border, is a vast sweep of moorland, relieved by hills which rise to considerable altitudes. It is drained by three tributaries of the Calder, the Colden, the Hebden, and the Lud, all of which flow through winding valleys, the scenery of which varies from the romantic to the majestic ere they join the principal stream at various points between Halifax and Todmorden. A great part of this district is uninhabited, and the traveller who wanders about it, passing up one valley and then crossing the moors to drop down into another, will



HEBDEN BRIDGE

observe that many of the houses which it contains are quite isolated. He will find here many of the quaint and picturesque stone houses which seem peculiar to the hilly districts of the West Riding, to the scenery of which their wide stone porches, strongly-built roofs, and general air of strength and solidity seems especially suited. They stand, for the most part, in isolated situations, sometimes in the depths of a valley, sometimes on the very summit of a wind-swept hill, sometimes on the edge of a purple moor, and in some cases they wear such an aspect of loneliness and utter solitude that it is impossible to avoid wondering what sort of life it is that is lived within their grey, storm-beaten walls.

One of the most interesting stretches of country in the district lying between Halifax and the Lancashire border is that known as Midgley Moors, from the highest part of which the traveller may obtain a magnificent prospect of the valley of the Calder. Midgley Moors are carpeted with heather, ling, bilberry, and cranberry, and their solitude presents a remarkable contrast to the busy industrial life of the valley below. From their highest point, Crow Hill—a title given to several considerable eminences in this neighbourhood—the principal landmarks of the border country are easily

perceivable. Stoodley Pike, a familiar object to all whose business or pleasure takes them along the valley of the Calder; High Brown Knowl, one of the most conspicuous heights to the north-east; Sowerby Crow Hill, rising to the west; and Blackstone Edge, on the verge of the county, are all prominent objects from this point, and vary in altitude from 1200 to 1550 feet. From Crow Hill on Midgley Moors there is a view of almost every bend and turn of the Calder between its source and the long sweep which it makes a little way beyond Elland. An even more extensive prospect of the hills in this district may be obtained from High Brown Knowl. This view, indeed, is probably unrivalled by any in the neighbourhood of the Calder, for it covers the entire parish of Halifax—a district fourteen miles in length by nine miles in width—and comprises the entire range of hills and moors surrounding it, several of which exceed 1500 feet in height. From this point, too, there is a very striking prospect of the valley of the Lud, a small stream which joins the Calder at Luddenden Foot. This valley is famous for its charm and beauty, and though it has plenty of evidences of industrialism in its brief course, the stream which flows through it is surrounded by woods and overhung by trees, amidst whose shade no suspicion of the adjacent mill or workshop seems to linger.

The highroad which leads across the hills and moors from Haworth to Hebden Bridge opens out a particularly striking and impressive district to the seeker after the picturesque. In the valley known as Crimsworth Dean—where there is enough matter for the attention of the geologist to occupy him for many long days—the scenery is very remarkable, and has been compared to some of the finest views obtainable in the Highlands of

Scotland. Hebden Bridge itself, given up to manufactures as it is, and having all its quaint stone houses put in the shade by its great mills, is a place of wildly romantic situation, and the valley of the Hebden beyond it, extending past the picturesque rock scenery of Hardcastle Crag to the moorlands which stretch away to the Lancashire borders, is full of views and scenes of a striking nature. The most re-



markable place in this corner of the Calder country is Heptonstall, an old-world town standing on high ground at a short distance from Hebden Bridge, which it overlooks. Heptonstall is probably one of the oldest centres of population in the neighbourhood. It is situated at an altitude of about 1000 feet above sea-level, and commands extraordinary views of the valleys of the Calder, the Colden, the Hebden, and the Crimsworth. It possesses an ancient church, round which some legends of varying interest centre, and its parish registers go back to the year 1593. It is said that Paulinus preached here in the seventh century, during his pilgrimage from Dewsbury into Lancashire. One of the Earls of Warren and Surrey is said to have chased his runaway daughter and her lover into Heptonstall church, and to have slain the priest who was performing their marriage ceremony, and also a number of folk who came to the rescue. The ancient church of Heptonstall probably owed its origin to the Earls of Warren, and that there is some truth in the foregoing legend seems to be proved by the fact that in 1482 the Archbishop of York issued a faculty to the chaplain of Heptonstall which permitted him to say mass in some other place than the church for four and twenty days, during which period the sacred precincts were to be duly cleansed of the profanation brought upon them by the shedding of blood in their midst. During the Civil War there was more bloodshed at Heptonstall as the result of an interesting contest between its town-folk and those of Halifax. Heptonstall, small place though it was, had garrisoned itself for the King; Halifax had declared for the Parliament. Very probably feeling that it was not in the nature of things that so small a town as Heptonstall should take an opposite view of a grave question and go unpunished, the Halifax Roundheads set out one night in November 1643, intending to reduce their neighbours to submission, with the result that they were utterly routed and driven back on Halifax in great confusion, leaving many dead and wounded in their rear.

Between Hebden Bridge and Todmorden, a town which in certain senses belongs to Lancashire and in other senses to Yorkshire, and has of late been ranked as a part of the broad-acred county for administrative purposes, the Calder winds towards its principal source through scenery which becomes wilder and more gloomy as it penetrates into the heart of the Pennine Range, the hills of which at this point are mountainous in their height and character. There is perhaps no other part of Yorkshire, even in the group of mountains in the Ingleborough district, where such wildness exists as the traveller will find on the long ridge of high ground which stretches from the Lancashire edge of Heptonstall moors to the north side of the vale of Todmorden, or from its south side to Blackstone Edge. Here are solitudes and wildnesses which to some minds must needs be terrifying, and are awe-striking to all. One great feature of the country hereabouts is the number of remarkable rocks which stand out from the general landscape and assume strange shapes and aspects. At the point where the



Calder, the Lancashire and Yorkshire Railway, and the highroad pass in close proximity to each other through the narrow vale of Cliviger, there is a formidable rock which narrows from base to point, and finally projects over the yawning gulf of the precipice beneath. This is known as the Witches' Horse Block, and tradition has it that it was here that the Queen of the Lancashire Witches made her compact with the devil. Ainsworth in writing his imaginative romance of "the Lancashire Witches" made extensive use of the scenery and legends of the Yorkshire border, and has described many of the prominent features of the vale of Todmorden. On the moors going towards Stiperdrene there are some more remarkable rocks, known as the York Stone and the Bride Stones. Of the latter, the Bridegroom alone remains standing, and is a rock of considerable size, resembling nothing so much as a slender-necked bottle, the mouth of which forms an apparently unsafe base for the vast mass towering above it.

The town of Todmorden, so far as territorial matters are concerned, is partly in Yorkshire and partly in Lancashire, but since the establishment of County Councils it has been entirely administered as a Yorkshire town, and may therefore be regarded as belonging to the latter county. There are few towns in England which occupy such a remarkable and romantic position, and fewer still which at first sight are so unpleasing to look upon. It lies deep down in a valley, sheltered on all sides from whatever winds may choose to blow by the great hills towering above it, and ere it became what it is—a town of great mills and grim, stone houses—it must have had something of the appearance of a Swiss village amongst the mountains. A little way beyond it, but across the Lancashire border, is the beautiful scenery of the Burnley valley, and the entire surroundings of the town are bold, wild, and impressive. From the hills which tower above its roofs and chimneys there are some wonderful prospects, but the aspect of the town does not add to their charm. That it has a history going back to days when the mill, with its long expanse of wall and monotonous rows of windows was unknown, is evidenced by its possession of an old church and hall, and of an ancient house called Scaitcliffe, where the Saxon family of Crossley have been in residence for hundreds of years. That it is also very new may be gathered from the nature of much of its architecture and from the pretentious style in which certain of its modern residences have been built. One of these, a house of considerable size known as Dobroyd Castle, occupies a singularly prominent site on the summit of a moor rising high above the town, and forms a landmark for some distance over the surrounding country. Landmarks hereabouts, indeed, are abundant. The monument which crowns the hill called Stoodley Pike, and which may be seen for miles along the valley of the Calder, was placed there in commemoration of the declaration of peace between Russia and the Allied Forces. At the heights topped by Cross Stone, on the opposite side of the valley, the excavation of an earth-circle recently brought to light some

very interesting relics of the Bronze Age. They consisted of flint flakes, two small cups or thuribles, and three urns. The largest of the urns proved to contain incinerated bones and charcoal ashes surrounding a smaller vessel, resembling the thuribles in shape, which had been inverted over a bronze spear-head attached to a wooden handle by rivets. There was no trace of iron in these discoveries, and the learned folk who examined them accordingly came to the conclusion that they belonged to the Bronze Age, and were relics of some race or other which peopled these hills and moors long before history begins.

The people who inhabit this district at the present time are in certain respects widely different from West Riding folk in general. They speak a dialect which sounds strange to men who hail from parts of the Riding where the speech is



NEAR HEPTONSTALL

supposed by strangers to be as broad and uncouth as it is possible for speech to be. In comparison with their daily vernacular, the speech of Leeds or Bradford, even of Halifax or Batley, is as the Latin of Horace compared to the Latin in which the mediæval monks wrote their canticles. They say "Aw" instead of "I," but with a very much broader accent than even a well-trained Yorkshire tongue can put into it, and "yo" instead of "you," with a curious inflection of the "o" to which nobody but a native could do justice. Occasionally they use idioms and terms which are absolutely unintelligible to the outsider, even if he has happened to live in the West Riding all his life. Also they are possessed of a formidable wit, and if occasion should serve, can turn the tables on an opponent with an ease which the most accomplished master of repartee might envy, or put forth an apposite remark which goes to the point with

wonderful directness. There are many stories told in this neighbourhood which illustrate the native wit and humour of its inhabitants, but none of them more characteristic of their native ability to say the right word on any subject than the following:—A former vicar of Rochdale, who was a doctor of divinity, and a member of the Universities of Oxford and Cambridge, came to Todmorden one day to preach a sermon, and at the close of the service proceeded to the inn to dine with some of the principal parishioners, amongst whom was a blunt old farmer. During the meal the conversation happened to turn on the respective merits of Oxford and Cambridge, and one of the company remarked that the former seemed to be in higher repute than the latter. To this the doctor assented, but added, somewhat boastfully, "You must remember that I am of both Universities," whereupon the old farmer naively observed, "Then yoan both mucked an' limed. Aw once had a coaf that seawked two keaws, an' th' more it seawked th' bigger coaf it grew." It is said that this witty observation gave great amusement to the ecclesiastic, which is a sure proof that he was learned in the peculiar speech and strange idioms of this corner of a county famous for the broadness and so-called uncouthness of its dialect.

## CHAPTER XXIX

### The Wharfe from Nun Appleton to Wetherby

CHARACTER AND COURSE OF THE WHARFE—ITS JUNCTION WITH THE OUSE—NUN APPLETON—RYTHER—ULLESKELF—BOLTON PERCY—GRIMSTON PARK—TADCASTER AND ITS HISTORY—THE RIVER COCK—BARWICK-IN-ELMET—ABERFORD—PARLINGTON PARK—LOTHERTON HALL—LEAD HALL—SAXTON—TOWTON HEATH AND ITS BATTLE IN 1461—HAZLEWOOD—STUTTON—BILBOROUGH AND THE FAIRFAX FAMILY—HEALAUGH AND ITS PRIORY—WIGHILL—WALTON—THORP ARCH—BOSTON SPA—CLIFFORD—BRAMHAM—THORNER—SCARCROFT—BARDSEY: THE BIRTHPLACE OF CONGREVE—WETHERBY AND ITS HISTORY.



**O**f all the Yorkshire rivers there are none so beautiful as the Wharfe. In its course of seventy-five miles it winds through every variety of scenery, from the wild mountainous districts in the midst of which it has its source, to the level plains of the Vale of York, through which it glides at slow pace to join the Ouse. Nothing can be more delightful to the lover of the picturesque, and nothing more profitable to the searcher after health, than a desultory journey along its banks taken at a leisurely pace and with no hard-and-fast rules as to

strict adherence to definite routes and pathways. Unlike some of the Yorkshire rivers of great original beauty spoiled by the gradual increase of manufactures and mining operations on their banks, the Wharfe is at no point of its course robbed of its charm or its purity by the presence of the mill or the workshop. There are few towns of any size situate on its banks—its adjacent towns are all chiefly ancient market-boroughs as picturesque and delightful as its own vagaries. The villages which surround it at almost every point are full of interesting features to the student of history and the lover of folk-lore, and there is not a mile along its banks on either side of which it may not be said that it possesses some value to the artist or the topographer. From its source under Cam Fell, at an elevation of some 1200 feet above sea-level, the Wharfe descends through the midst of magnificent hill scenery, wild and solitary in nature, to the green valley to which it has given its name. All along its winding ways its surroundings are continually changing. The mighty rocks which frown upon it at first soon give place to the pastoral beauty of Grassington and Burnsall, which in its turn is superseded by the romantic scenery of wood, rock, and heath-clad hill that makes the neighbourhood of Bolton Abbey the most picturesque and beautiful corner of Yorkshire. From the ancient religious house by the Wharfe its course winds through the heart of a wide dale, the high ground of which is covered by vast moorlands whereon there is no sound or sign of life save the calling of the birds or the bleating of mountain sheep. Bold rock scenery at Ilkley, and the rugged crags and luxuriant hillside coppices of the Chevin at Otley, give it a new character as it sweeps onward from Upper to Lower Wharfedale. It loses little of its beauty as it draws nearer to the Ouse. Its surroundings from Harewood to Boston Spa are little less romantic than at Otley, and when it reaches Tadcaster and becomes a tidal river, winding through low banks heavily overhung by willow and sedge, it has features and charms as beautiful in their way as the bolder and wilder scenes nearer its source. Of all the rivers which flow into the Ouse there are none so full of romantic scenes and associations as the Wharfe, or so alluring to the lover of nature.

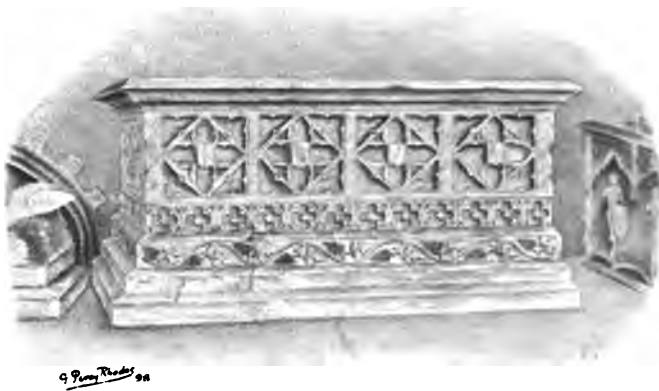
## I

Where the Wharfe joins the Ouse, a little distance above Cawood, on the west bank of the latter river, the land is of the flat character which distinguishes the whole country lying within the confines of the vale of York. It stretches away on all sides in a dead level which is only relieved from absolute plainness and monotony by the exceeding richness of the vegetation and the pleasant pastoral landscapes which present themselves from every standpoint. At the very outset of his wanderings along its banks the traveller finds a historic house looking out upon the Wharfe near the point where it glides unobtrusively into the Ouse. On its north

bank stands Nun Appleton, one of the most interesting country seats in Yorkshire, which was for a long period the home of the Fairfax family and afterwards of the Milners. The surroundings of this ancient mansion are full of charm and beauty, and the gardens and terraces present a fine aspect, seen from the banks of the river. Nun Appleton derives its name from the fact that on the site of the present house there originally stood a convent of nuns of the Cistercian Order, founded in the twelfth century by Adeliza de St. Quintin. This religious house is said to have numbered amongst its inmates members of some of the best families in Yorkshire during mediæval times, but like the convent at Nun Monkton it gained a very unenviable reputation, and various ancient papers and documents would seem to show that its inmates were exceedingly lax in their keeping of rules and vows. It became necessary at one time for the ecclesiastical authorities to enact that they should give up their frequenting of the banks of the Wharfe and of the neighbouring alehouses, where it would appear they had been in the habit of meeting the young gallants of the district, and further that they should not take any man, priest or layman, into their chambers or secret places by night or day. According to Dugdale, the value of the convent at the time of the Dissolution was £73, 9s. 10d., and it then supported a prioress and fourteen nuns. It was granted by Henry VIII. to one Robert Darknal in 1542, and ten years later its owner alienated it, by royal permission, to Sir William Fairfax, whose successors built the original brick mansion on the site of the nunnery. Sir Thomas Fairfax spent his leisure moments here after the troublous times of the Civil War, and here for two years Andrew Marvell was engaged as tutor to some younger members of the family. After Sir Thomas became Lord Fairfax he kept great state at Nun Appleton, entertaining various famous folk—amongst them Charles II. and George Villiers, Duke of Bucking-

ham, who married Mary, Fairfax's only daughter—with lavish hospitality, until his death in 1671.

At Ryther, a little hamlet on the opposite bank of the Wharfe, there are several interesting memorials of some of the old families of the neighbourhood. The church is ancient, and rich in monuments, and a considerable



G. Perry, Ryther 98

TOMB IN RYTHER CHURCH

portion of its architecture dates back to the eleventh century. The south aisle is almost entirely filled with effigies and altar-tombs, many of which are much worn by time, or were despoiled by the Parliamentarians during the Civil War. Most of them are supposed to commemorate members of the Ryther family, who had here a castle, all trace of which has been lost for a long period, during the first three centuries after the Norman Conquest. At the end of the aisle are the effigies of a crusader and his lady. An altar-tomb of alabaster marble, in the carving of which there is some very fine Italian work, is supposed to be the memorial of a Ryther who fought at Towton, and whose effigy is here depicted clad in full armour. Another tomb, resting under an arch in the wall, presents a female figure in the dress of the thirteenth century, clasping a heart in its hands. Several generations of the Ryther family were interred in this church, but their monuments are so worn and defaced that it is impossible to procure definite information concerning them. There are some interesting fragments of Saxon work in the church at Grimston, near Ulleskelf, a short distance from Ryther on the south bank of the Wharfe. They have presumably formed parts of a cross, and were discovered some time ago beneath the flooring. There is also in this church a Norman font. Ulleskelf was at one time an inland port from whence stone was sent by the Vavasours to York for the building of the Minster, but it has now no signs of life or business, and is chiefly dear to anglers who come there to fish in the Wharfe. Grimston Park, on the west of the village, was once a seat of the Earls of Londesborough, and is famed throughout the district for the luxuriance of its vegetation and foliage, and for the size and antiquity of the trees which shut it in from the surrounding country.

Across the Wharfe from Ulleskelf the traveller will find a delightful old-world village and an extremely interesting church at Bolton Percy, a cluster of picturesque houses and cottages, embowered amongst gardens and orchards, which stands on a small stream flowing into the river from the neighbourhood of Healaugh and Wighill. Here the lover of village life will find much to interest him. Many of the houses, like those of the Ouse-side villages and hamlets, are topped by red tiles, but there are also some roofs of thatch. The church is one of the finest village churches in Yorkshire, and has near it an ancient tythe-barn and a picturesque rectory. There was a church and a priest here in Saxon times, and the present edifice, which is said to be the largest and finest in the Ainsty of York, was built in the early years of the fifteenth century, and consecrated July 8, 1424, by the Bishop of Dromore. It is in the Perpendicular style, and consists of nave, with north and south aisles, chancel, with vestry, south porch of modern work, and a tower, with pinnacled battlements, at the west end. On the north side of the chancel there is a very fine sedilia surmounted by crocketed canopies, with a piscina close by, and above the east window, which contains five lights, is an ancient stone crucifix, which

bears the effigies of the Virgin and Child on the obverse. The oak stalls are much worn and marked, and their despoiled appearance is attributed to the vandalism of the Parliamentarians, who are also said to have destroyed or carried off the numerous brasses which formerly belonged to the church. There is here, at the west end, near the font, an ancient specimen of a devil's door, through which the devil was believed to fly when the rite of baptism was performed. There are several interesting memorials of the Fairfax family in the church of Bolton Percy. At the east end of the south aisle is the monument of Ferdinand, Lord Fairfax. Within the altar rails is the tomb of Henry Fairfax, rector of the parish during the Commonwealth, and of his wife, who died respectively in 1665 and 1649. It was in this church, in 1657, that Mary Fairfax was married to the Duke of Buckingham, who wasted the vast fortune which she brought him, and neglected her, without estranging from himself the affection which she had given him when he first came, a gay and attractive gallant, to her father's house at Nun Appleton.

Another place in this district which is interesting because of its connection with the Fairfax family is Steeton Hall, their original seat or stronghold. This house, which was once moated, is now a farmstead, and preserves but a trace of its former condition. It was from Steeton that William Fairfax set out one day in 1518 for the convent at Nun Appleton, bent on abducting his sweetheart, Isabel Thwaites, an heiress of considerable fortune, who was detained there by the prioress and sisterhood. Fairfax had little difficulty in storming the convent, and in securing his bride, to whom he was immediately married at Bolton Percy church. It was by this marriage that the manors and estates of Denton and Askwith in Wharfedale, with other important possessions in York, came into the hands of the Fairfax family. Another family of some note in this district, and still commemorated by the chapel which bears their name in Bolton Percy church was that of Brockett, which had a seat at Appleton Roebuck, near Bolton Percy. There are now no traces of Brockett Hall at Appleton Roebuck, but the village is well worth seeing, because of the remains of a moat which must have been of extraordinary depth and width, and of the picturesque appearance of some of its cottages, which are timbered and thatched in the style of the fifteenth century.

At a little distance from Steeton Hall, the by-road on which it stands leads into the highroad connecting York with Tadcaster, into the midst of which ancient town the traveller speedily gains admittance by a fine stone bridge that carries the highway across the Wharfe. Than Tadcaster few places in Yorkshire have a more interesting or a longer history. It was the *Calcaria* of Roman Britain, and at all times one of the most important stations during the Roman occupation. Over the derivation of its name there have, as is usual in all such matters, been numerous controversies and arguments, and not all the learned and erudite authorities have been

convinced that the present Tadcaster occupies the exact site of the Roman station, for Dodsworth declared that it was nearer Wetherby, at St. Helen's Ford, where large numbers of Roman remains, urns, coins, and rings have from time to time been unearthed. Just as many Roman



TADCASTER

remains, however, of whose antiquity there is no reasonable doubt, have at various periods been discovered at Tadcaster. As to the derivation of its name, Gale says that it comes from the Latin *Calx pedis* and the British *Tah*, but Gough in his additions to Camden's *Britannia*, says that in his opinion the Saxons called it *Eald Caster*, and the Anglo-Saxons *T'aud Caster*, from



whence its modern name of Tadcaster arose. Leland, visiting Tadcaster in Henry VIII.'s time, remarks of it that it "standith on the nether ripe of Wharfe river and is a good thoroughfare. The bridge here over Wharfe hath eight fair arches of stone. Sum say that it was last made of part of the ruines of the olde castelle of Tadcaster, a mighty great hill ; dikes and garth of this castelle on Wharfe be yet seen a little above the bridge. It seemeth by the plot that it was a right stately thing." Various travellers whose business or pleasure brought them to Tadcaster in the old days, noticed that the Wharfe often runs dry here, and there are verses on the matter in the rhyming chronicles of Eades, sometime Dean of Worcester, and of Drunken Barnaby, who records of the town that he saw a fair bridge, no water under it, plenty of beggars in the streets, and much broken pavement.

The parish church of Tadcaster, dedicated to St. Mary, is a fine edifice in the Perpendicular style, and consists of nave, chancel, and aisles which extend the whole length of the church, and of a tower battlemented and pinnaced. The principal entrance is by a circular doorway at the west end. The windows of the aisles and of the clerestory are square-headed, and have three lights each. Within, a high-pointed arch of Norman architecture divides nave from chancel, and on the east wall of the latter, obscuring the window, there is a large altar-piece of the Last Supper. Matilda de Percy, Countess of Warwick, gave this church, with the approval of its then incumbent, to the Abbot and monks of Sawley, on the grounds that they were in sore want, and in danger of having to break up their establishment by reason of the inclemency of its situation, which permitted them to grow nothing for their sustenance. Her friendly and good intentions to the Sawley community were seconded by her sister Agnes, who confirmed Matilda's grant in 1195, but early in the next century King John began haggling over prices and securities, and the community on the Lancashire border do not appear to have greatly benefited by the piety of the De Percy sisters. The registers of Tadcaster parish church, which date back to about the middle of the sixteenth century, contain some curious and interesting entries. In January 1591 Thomas Nicholson was married to Alice Grange, promising, before the performance of the ceremony, that the said Alice should have half of his farm during her widowhood. An entry of 1603 records that between the feasts of St. Michael the Archangel (29th Sept.) and St. John the Baptist (24th June), there died of the plague in Tadcaster above six score men, women, and children. The following entry is of a somewhat uncommon nature:—

"Elizabeth Marshall, of this town, died March 9th, 1788, aged eighty-three years. She could boast excellence of parts ; when young she was beautiful. When young, did I say ? She was so till she was seventy-nine, and she was highly good."

Although its ancient appearance has not entirely passed away, as the existence in its midst of several houses and cottages, with one or two roomy



KIDDAL HALL

and comfortable old-fashioned inns, proves, Tadcaster is now to all intents and purposes a modern town. Its principal trade is in ale. Five hundred years ago it was famous for its brown ale: to-day it is equally renowned for ales dark and light, bitter and mild. Its principal brewery is worthy to rank in point of size with the famous establishments at Burton-on-Trent, and to most people in the north of England its name, as a town, probably suggests nothing more than that good beer is brewed at Tadcaster. Yet there are many other matters connected with the town which are of much more importance to the historian and the topographer. It was raided by the Scots early in the fourteenth century, and the marks of their depredations are still to be seen on the walls of the parish church, to which the marauders set fire. During the Civil War it was the scene of an engagement between the Royalists under the Marquis of Newcastle, and the Parliamentarians under Sir Thomas Fairfax, which resulted in a victory for the former. There is a very strange story told in local annals in relation to this engagement. One Captain Lister was shot through the head during the progress of hostilities, and was buried in the choir of the parish church. Some years afterwards his son, happening to pass through the town, visited the church, and meeting the sexton asked to be shown his father's grave. The sexton thereupon exhibited to him a skull, newly disinterred, and pointing to a bullet firmly lodged in it, declared that it was the skull of Captain Lister. It is said that the dead man's son was so affected at the sight that he immediately fell ill and within a brief period was dead.

## II

At a little distance from Tadcaster the Wharfe is joined by a small tributary, the Cock, a stream which, insignificant in proportion as it is, is still full of charm and interest, from the mere fact that it passes through some picturesque and noteworthy country. It rises in the land surrounding a farmstead on Whin Moor, a tract of land supposed by some authorities to have been the site of the battle of Wynwaedsfeld, fought in 655 between Oswiu and his Christians, and Penda and his Mercian savages, and resulting in the overwhelming defeat of the latter. From the very beginning of its twelve-mile course the Cock is surrounded by places and objects of interest, around which many remarkable associations and memories circle. Near its source is a plot of land called Hell Garth, where the slain who fell in the great fight between Christian and Pagan are said to be buried. Close at hand is Kiddal Hall, an ancient building, probably dating from the twelfth or thirteenth century, which is said to be haunted by the ghost of one John Ellis, a member of an old family which had occupied the house for centuries. John Ellis was a staunch Royalist, slain by the Parliamentarians who came foraging in the district for food and provender, and tradition has it that his spirit has never been able to leave the place from which his body was so suddenly and violently cut off. During some alterations carried out here of recent years, a hiding-place was brought to light and found to contain some relics of the Civil War. The chief object of interest at Kiddal Hall, however, is the very fine fifteenth-century window of three lights, which projects in a bay, surmounted by a battlemented and pinnacled parapet from an angle of the house, and on which appears the following inscription:—

Orate pro bono statu Thome Elgs et Anne uxoris sue qui  
istam fenestram fecerunt, Anno Dni M.C.C.C. mo primo.

Close to Kiddal Hall, on a by-road leading towards Garforth, is Barwick-in-Elmet, a place particularly interesting to the historical student as retaining in its name a direct association with the old kingdom of Elmete, and as being the site of the castle or stronghold of its kings. This kingdom, of which Bede remarks that it was faithful to Christian faith and practice through the dark days of Angle Paganism, extended over a considerable district in the middle of Yorkshire, and was chiefly covered by thick and impenetrable forests, some traces of which remain in the ancient oaks of the neighbourhood. The Northumbrian kings made it their granary (*berewic* = corn-village), and Eadwine, the first Christian king of Northumbria, had here a house, probably used as a hunting-lodge. There are here two eminences known as Wendel Hill and Hall Tower Hill, the first of which is said to have been a Celtic stockade, and the

second the site of a royal palace in Angle days. After the Norman Conquest, Barwick-in-Elmet came into the possession of the De Lacys, who in all probability were originally responsible for the building of its church, though there was an Angle monastery here about the middle of the eighth century. There is a relic of Saxon days in Barwick church in the shape of a rudely-carved stone built into the wall of the south aisle. The present church dates from the eleventh century, and has a massive tower which is built of two different sorts of stone, one of which, a light chalk stone, was presented by one of the Vavasours in the fifteenth century. There is a market-cross in the centre of the village, and a Maypole which is lowered and raised again amidst great festivities every three years.



ABERFORD

About two miles eastward of Barwick-in-Elmet the Cock passes through the strikingly picturesque market-town of Aberford, in the heart of which a stone bridge carries the Great North Road over the stream. In Camden's time Aberford was celebrated for the manufacture of pins, a fact noted by Drunken Barnaby, who in his rhyming chronicle says that when he fled from Tadcaster, disgusted with its dried-up river, its bad pavements and its swarms of mendicants, he came to Aberford,

“ whose beginning  
Came from buying drink with pinning.”

Nowadays there is little of the market-town about Aberford. It is a long, straggling place, built on either side the Great North Road, or Roman Rig, which ran from Legiolium (Castleford) to Isurium (Aldborough). Hereabouts the famous highway is of a remarkable width, and in its progress through Aberford dips and rises in whimsical fashion. Aberford is full of quaint houses and roomy inns, behind which are spacious stables, the presence of which is suggestive nowadays of the immediate neighbourhood of some

famous pack of hounds. The markets and fairs—originally granted in 1248—which used to be held in Aberford are held there no longer. At one time it had four fairs every year—one in April, one in May, and two in October—and a weekly market, held on Wednesdays, and the chief commodities dealt in were cattle, sheep, and pedlary. Few Yorkshire villages—for it is but a village in size—have such a pleasant picturesqueness as Aberford. From the garden of the old inn overlooking the bridge there is a charming prospect of the houses clustering round the open space on the north bank of the stream and of the woods stretching away towards Bramham. There are equally pleasant views from the churchyard. The church, which stands on a gentle eminence above the village street, is very old, and bears abundant traces of its antiquity in spite of recent restoration. Its Norman tower is surmounted by a spire of a later period of architecture, but there are several round-headed Norman arches in the fabric, and also some remains of herring-bone masonry similar to that which is seen in the crypt of York Minster.

In the country lying south of the Cock there are several places of interest and much picturesqueness of wood and meadowland. At Parlington Park on the southern extremity of Aberford, Edward II.'s favourites, the De Spencers, lived; from Garforth Cliff, a high eminence beyond the modern village of that name, there is a fine view of the valley of the Aire, extending over the district lying between Leeds and Pontefract. At Lotherton, on the other side of the Roman Rig from Aberford, there is a curious chapel of great antiquity, with a Norman doorway and a Norman east window, which is less than a foot in width. The entire length of this edifice, which consists of chancel and nave, is under 60 feet, and its width at the west end is 21 feet. Another curious example of church architecture to be found a little distance away, and close to the banks of the Cock, is the diminutive church of Lead, erected six hundred years ago as a private chapel for the use of the occupants of Lead Hall, in these days a country seat or stronghold of great importance, but now a ruin. This church has been restored of recent years, and consists of a plain oblong building, buttressed at each of its four corners, with a round-arched doorway and square-headed window of two lights on its south side and a bell-turret at the west end, which is pierced by a pointed window. Its surroundings are eminently picturesque, and its interior, though exceedingly simple, is worth examining for the sake of certain tombstones in the flooring which bear the arms of the ancient family of Teyes. Within a short distance of Lead church there is another church of historic interest in that of Saxton, where most of the nobility and gentry who were slain at Towton are buried. Not far from Saxton church there are the remains of an ancient Roman camp. The tower of Saxton church contains some curious twelfth-century gravestones which were taken from the churchyard and used in building the tower three centuries later. The incised cross on these stones being placed outwards, gives them a significant appearance, which some people have taken to mean

that they were placed there as memorials of some of the slain at Towton. The interior of Saxton church is remarkable for its round-headed arches and for its evidences of great antiquity, and in its chancel there are several monuments in memory of members of the Hawke and Hungate families. Another place of much interest in this neighbourhood is Huddleston Quarry, from which vast quantities of stone have been taken at various times during the past two thousand years. It is highly probable that the Romans obtained most of their material for building their fortifications, temples, and mansions at York from this quarry, or that Æthelstane procured stone from it when he repaired York after the siege of 927. Very recently a remarkable fossil, representing a large root and plant of a hart's tongue fern, was found in Huddleston Quarry and removed to Sherburn. Its height was nearly 4 feet, its circumference about 3 feet, and its weight over 200 pounds, and though it was somewhat damaged in separating it from the rock in which it was embedded, it is a very fine specimen of petrification, a delicate yellow in colour, with deep stripes of darker yellow and brown shading its ground tint.

The scene of the famous battle of Towton Heath, fought between the armies of the rival houses of York and Lancaster on Palm Sunday, March 29, 1461, lies between the windings of the river Cock and the highroad running from Sherburn to Tadcaster. Hereabouts the land is undulating and broken up into minor valleys, and to-day the battlefield is under strict cultivation, and surrounded by the luxuriantly wooded parks of Scarthingwell, Hazlewood, and Grimston. There is a local legend that the red and white roses which abound in the immediate neighbourhood of Towton Heath spring from the blood of the opposing armies, and it is certain that that was shed so freely that the waters of the Cock were dyed purple, and that the Wharfe three miles away was tinged with a ruddy hue.

According to Green, the total number of combatants engaged at Towton—which he describes as the most obstinate struggle fought in England since the battle of Hastings—was nearly 120,000. The fight began at an early hour of the morning, and its first stages were conducted in the thick of a blinding snowstorm, through which the Yorkists, under Edward, advanced with fierce resolution upon the Lancastrians. How the battle raged for six hours without either side claiming any decisive advantage; how Warwick, seeing his men falter, leapt from his horse at a critical moment and slew it, swearing on the cross of his sword to win the day or die on the field; and how as noon drew near, the arrival of the Duke of Norfolk with reinforcements drawn from the Eastern Counties decided the issue, and gave the victory to the House of York, are matters which have been described in full by every English historian. The Lancastrians, forced back upon the Cock by the overwhelming advance of their opponents, were slain upon its banks by thousands, and such of them as managed to cross it, over the dead bodies of their brothers in arms, were pursued relentlessly by the victorious Yorkists. All through the afternoon and evening of that day,

throughout the night and the day which followed, the vanquished were pursued and slain, and the little villages of Barkston Ash and Skyrack saw scenes of bloodshed and violence, which were talked of by the hearthstones of farmstead and cottage for long generations. Although the victory of Edward and the supporters of the House of York was complete, the loss on each side was almost equal. Nearly 40,000 men fell at Towton, and of that number more than half, according to the computation of Edward's herald, were adherents of the Lancastrian cause. There are few places in England where the earth is so thickly strewn with dead men's bones as this quiet corner of Yorkshire.

On the opposite side of the Cock from Towton, seated on high ground in the midst of a finely wooded park, is Hazlewood Hall, the ancient home of the Vavasours, who have held it and its adjoining lands ever since the days of the Conqueror, save for one brief period during the reign of Henry III., when the estates were in pawn to Aaron, the famous Jew money-lender of York, who had advanced £350 upon them. Sir Maguer le Vavasour was one of William of Normandy's most zealous supporters, and distinguished himself for his bravery at Hastings. He is mentioned in Domesday Book as holding lands and manors hereabouts under the Percys. Leave to castellate the house was given by Edward I. in 1286. Sir William le Vavasour, who was at that time holder of the estates, founded in the same year the chapel of St. Leonard, which adjoins the house, and is still in an excellent state of preservation. It is of the Gothic style of architecture and contains some very interesting monuments, painted windows, and nine effigies of the various members of Sir Walter Vavasour's family. This chapel is said to have been the only one in which mass was permitted to be celebrated during the reign of Elizabeth, who exempted it from the general order because of her love for the Vavasour family; and though a similar claim has

been put forward for other private chapels, it is certain that the services of the Roman Catholic Church have been held here for six centuries without any intermission. The views from Hazlewood Hall are wide and diversified, and command extensive prospects of the



TOMB OF LORD FAIRFAX, BILBOROUGH

surrounding country and of the cathedrals of York and Lincoln. All the way from Hazlewood to Tadcaster there are charming views of the country lying to the north and west, and there is a glimpse of old-fashioned village life at Stutton, a hamlet just outside the town, where there are wide willow-garths and extensive orchards surrounding the old houses. The land around this stretch of the Wharfe is entirely devoted to agriculture, and is chiefly remarkable for the richness of the pastures through which the river winds towards the wilder scenery beyond.

## III

On the north bank of the Wharfe, in the district lying between Tadcaster and Wetherby, there are several villages and places of more than ordinary interest. Of these, one of the most notable is Bilborough, a village which stands at an elevation of over 150 feet above sea-level, and affords very extensive views of the valleys of the Nidd, Wharfe, and Ouse,—a general prospect which covers one of the richest agricultural districts in the county. On the eminence now occupied by Bilborough village an Angle stronghold once stood, and on its outskirts there are traces of other fortifications which were surrounded by moats—one at Catterton and one at Whitehall, both lying to the west of the village. Bilborough, however, has its principal charm in its associations with the family of Fairfax. In the village street there is an old house bearing the initials R. F., which was once the residence of Admiral Robert Fairfax; in the church repose the bodies of Thomas, Lord Fairfax, and Anne his wife; at the hall, still the residence of a member of the family, are numerous relics of the great Fairfaxes of the sixteenth century. The church is small, and contains some specimens of Norman work, and has of late years undergone repairs and restoration. It possesses a chapel, founded in 1492, by one John Norton, a London merchant, who was lord of the manor of Bilborough at that time, and was buried here at his death. He left six marks for the maintenance of a charity, previously founded by Sir William Draper, and for masses for his own soul and the souls of his family. The tomb of the great Parliamentarian and his wife bears the following inscription, which is carved upon a massive slab of black marble:—

HERE LYE THE BODIES OF THE RIGHT HONBLE.  
 THOMAS, LORD FAIRFAX, OF DENTON,  
 BARON OF CAMERON,  
 WHO DYED NOVEMBER YE XII, 1671,  
 IN THE 60<sup>th</sup> YEARE OF HIS AGE,  
 AND OF ANNE HIS WIFE, DAUGHTER AND CO-HEIR OF  
 HORATIO, LORD VERE,  
 BARON OF TILBURY.  
 THEY HAD ISSUE  
 MARY, DUCHESS OF BUCKINGHAM,  
 AND ELIZABETH.  
 THE MEMORY OF THE JUST IS BLESSED.



The tomb bears the arms of the Fairfax family, with its motto *Fare Fac*, and is further ornamented by armorial bearings and designs of military significance. At the hall there are numerous relics of the Fairfaxes, of which the most interesting are the arm-chair used by Lord Fairfax during his last illness, a family Bible, presented to Ferdinand Fairfax by Sir Thomas Denton in 1612 at the christening of the future general, two richly ornamented prayer-books, the armour, boots, and spurs of Lord Fairfax, and some relics of the Civil War of varying interest. There is also here a noteworthy collection of family portraits, including those of Thomas, Lord Fairfax, and Admiral Robert Fairfax.

Another village of note, also standing on a gentle eminence commanding wide prospects of the surrounding country, is Helaugh. At first sight it presents little of attractiveness superior to that of any other village in these parts, where almost every little centre of population is surrounded by a certain picturesqueness made up by the association of trees and hedge-rows, meadows and orchards, and of cottages and farmsteads whose roofs and gables are topped by the grey tower or spire of the church. Helaugh, however, has a distinction which gives it some consequence—it is one of the oldest places in the neighbourhood, and was one of the chief strongholds of the Christian faith in Angle days. Where its church now stands there are undoubted traces of Saxon earthwork, and the discovery of a stone, bearing Runic characters, in the churchyard some years ago seems to prove that there was a church here in very early days. The present church possesses a porch which is curiously ornamented, and appears to be of eleventh-century architecture, while a door which gives access to the chancel at the south-east end of the church is of the style of the thirteenth century. Under the chancel arch there is a fine marble altar-tomb which supports the effigies of Lord Wharton and his two wives, and within the chancel there are numerous tombstones commemorating various members of the family of Mortimer. About half-way between the village and Tadcaster there is a farmhouse called Helaugh Manor, which occupies the site and was probably built out of some of the remains of Helaugh Priory, a minor religious establishment which sprang from a hermitage established in the forest land hereabout by Gilbert, a monk of Marmontier, about the end of the twelfth century. Geoffrey Haget, called the Justiciar, founded a church here about 1200, and dedicating it to St. John the Evangelist, settled some monks upon its lands. His granddaughter, Alice, wife of Jordon de Sancta Maria, transformed the establishment into a Benedictine monastery, but neither she nor her grandfather appear to have made much provision for its maintenance, and in the middle of the fourteenth century its inmates were so badly off that indulgences were being sold on their behalf. Matters must, however, have improved with them, for the monastery appears to have been rebuilt before the commencement of the fifteenth century, and at the Dissolution it was worth £86, 5s. 9d., and supported fourteen monks.

Still another village church perched on an eminence overlooking the surrounding country is found at Wighill, a picturesquely situated place whose history goes back to very early times. The hill on which Wighill church stands was originally the site of a Saxon fortress, and is said to have been the scene between Angles commands an aspect of the vale the course of point consider-Selby. Wighill some quaint old most interesting church, which quity equal, if that of any re-along the entire Wharfe. It has Norman door-and its general terior and in-its great age. objects of in-church are the family of



DOORWAY. HELAUGH CHURCH

held the manor for some centuries. A brass plate in the chancel records the purchase of Wighill manor by a Stapleton in 1376, and gives the names of members of no less than eleven generations of the family who were buried in and about the north aisle—formerly the Chapel of St. Mary—between 1503 and 1768. The church also contains an effigy of a knight, supposed to be a Stapleton of the fifteenth century. There is a legend that this family, one of whose badges is a Saracen's head, first obtained the manor of Wighill by the bravery and daring of one of their ancestors, who about the eleventh century went forth and slew a certain piratical Saracen, and was rewarded by the king with these lands, whereon his successors lived for several hundreds of years. A little distance from Wighill, going westward, is another ancient village, Walton, originally a Celtic settlement, near which was the Roman ford, afterwards called St. Helen's, which Dodsworth considered to be the true site of the station named *Calcaria*. This ford was so named from Helena, mother of Constantine the Great, and near it at various periods several Roman remains have been unearthed. Here Leland speaks of seeing a chapel, and this and a well close by were in existence for some time after his visit to this neighbourhood, but there is now no trace of either, though there is a spring

of a battle between Celts. It extensive prospect of York and of the Ouse to a valley below village contains houses, but its possession is its boast an antiquity superior to religious edifice course of the a very fine way and arches, appearance, exterior, betokens The principal interest in the associated with Stapleton, who

here on the virtues of which as a love-charm much reliance is placed. Near Walton the Fairfaxes had a residence, surrounded by a moat, and here during the fifteenth century was born Robert Fairfax, the composer, whose masses are still known to lovers of ancient music, and who wrote the songs and anthems used at the commemoration of the accession of Henry VII. In the ivy-covered church of Walton there are several ancient monuments of great interest. One, an exceedingly time-worn effigy, is said to be in commemoration of Nicholas Fairfax, a great warrior and a member of the Order of Knights-Hospitallers of St. John of Jerusalem. The surroundings of Walton are eminently rural, and its ancient thatched cottages and leafy by-lanes are very suggestive of peace and ease.

Somewhat south of Walton, and situate on the banks of the Wharfe, are two places of considerable attraction, Thorpe Arch and Boston Spa, divided from each other by the river, which at this point attains considerable force, and begins to show signs of the romantic side of its character, which is more marked in Upper Wharfedale. In spring and summer both these villages are much visited by tourists and holiday-makers, who find in their neighbourhood abundant means of gratifying a love of the picturesque and beautiful, while at Boston Spa there is a further attraction for the drinker of mineral waters in the presence of a chalybeate spring to which people resort from all parts. Both these villages are of ancient origin. On the site of Thorpe Arch there was a Norse settlement of the common name of Thorp, which afterwards became the home of the Norman family of D'Arques, one of the earliest members of which, Osbern de Archis, was living here about the beginning of the twelfth century, and gave lands situate in Poppleton to St. Mary's Abbey. Ivetta, wife of William de Archis, joined with her husband in founding the Priory of Nun Monkton, and their daughter Matilda was the first prioress. This family was established in Thorp for generations, but all trace of it is now lost, save in the fact that its name has been added on to the original name of the village. The church of Thorp Arch is a fine structure of the Norman period, and is said to occupy the site of a previous Saxon church. Gamel, son of Orm, held Thorp previous to his murder by Earl Tosti in 1064. If the discovery of Roman remains may be taken to mean that the place where they were found was a Roman station, Boston Spa can claim an antiquity as great as that of Castleford or Tadcaster or Aldborough. In 1848, while some excavations were being carried out in the village, a vessel was unearthed which contained a large number of Roman coins of the Consular series and of the reign of Adrian, together with a quantity of Imperial denarii. A discovery of a much more important nature to the inhabitants of Thorp Arch and Boston Spa was that of one John Shires, a native, in 1744. He, being one day engaged in some agricultural pursuit on the banks of the Wharfe, accidentally hit upon a spring of chalybeate water, which on being tested

proved to be of very fine qualities. Around this spring the modern Boston Spa, a miniature Harrogate, has sprung up, with pump-rooms and baths, and plenteous accommodation for invalids. Whether all the folk who come here during the spring and summer months are attracted solely by the fame of the waters which John Shires discovered is a question that needs no answer. The riverside scenery hereabouts is singularly charming, especially at the point known as Deepdale, where the Wharfe winds between high walls of limestone which are half hidden by masses of rich foliage. On a fine evening in summer there are few views in this part of the Wharfe valley as pleasant as that which meets the eye where the arched bridge crosses the river and links the two leafy villages together.

The villages on the south bank of the Wharfe between Tadcaster and Wetherby are no less interesting than those on the north. At Newton Kyme, a short distance from the former town, there is a pretty church, embowered in ivy, and containing some noticeable Norman work. In the churchyard there are certain remains which are said to be the ruins of a Norman castle. Not far away, going in the direction of Bramham, is a village of considerable size, called Clifford, which possesses two churches of notable appearance, one belonging to the Church of England and the other to the Church of Rome. In former days this was an agricultural village, pure and simple, but according to a local rhymester it possessed about the middle of this century extensive thread works, and the spinning-wheel was whirring in every cottage. It now appears to have resumed its agricultural pursuits. From its principal street a winding lane, terminating in a very steep hill, from the summit of which the traveller may enjoy a remarkable and wide-spreading prospect of the country round about York, and of the land lying at the foot and along the sides of the Howardian and Hambleton Hills, leads to Bramham, a village famous wherever the sport of fox-hunting is carried on. There are few sportsmen, and indeed few Englishmen, who are not familiar with the names of Bramham Moor and George Lane Fox, the fine old country squire who loved fox-hunting as zealously and honestly as he hated new-fangled ideas in politics or religion. There are few villages, too, in these parts so attractive or so picturesquely situated as Bramham, which lies on two shelving banks, intersected by the highroad leading from Aberford to Wetherby. Its houses and cottages, built in irregular terraces on the falling ground, are quaint and old-fashioned, and the position of its church, which stands on a plateau at the foot of the village, on the eastern side of the highway, is alike striking and romantic. Here in the churchyard the famous squire of Bramham, who is said to have refused more than one offer of a peerage, preferring to live and die a plain Yorkshire gentleman, was laid to rest a few years ago amongst the deep regrets of men who recognised in him a thorough type of a class which has almost disappeared. The stories which might be told

of George Lane Fox, the memories which might be put into words, the recollections of his quaint, original, and extremely forcible remarks, uttered in his own characteristic fashion at puppy-walking dinners, flower-shows, and similar functions, would fill a volume. Of him it may safely be said that English country life will never find his like, and that his death removed one of the most remarkable figures in Yorkshire.

The church of Bramham dates from a period prior to the Conquest, and in its present form is principally Norman and Early English in style. It was restored in 1854, and suffered considerably from fire twenty years later. It contains numerous monuments, chiefly in the shape of marble tablets, in memory of the ancient families of Bingley and Fox. Its spire, which rises from a tower, is a prominent landmark along the little valley at the foot of the village, and the churchyard which surrounds it is very extensive. The graves of the Fox family are on the slope on the south side of the church, and contain little in the way of inscription. Bramham Park,

the residence of the Foxes, is an enclosure of considerable extent, lying on the west side of the highroad which leads from the village of Bramham towards the elevated ground known as Bramham Moor—a wide stretch of country which was the haunt of highwaymen until the end of the last century. The Park was enclosed by Robert Benson, to whom it was granted during the reign of William III. He laid out the grounds and plantations, and the house was built, during the reign of Anne, by his son, another Robert Benson, who, after representing York in Parliament, was raised to the peerage under the title of Lord Bingley. The plans were designed by an Italian architect, and the house when completed was very magnificent in size and



BRAMHAM

style. Unfortunately it was destroyed by fire in 1828, and instead of rebuilding it its then owner took up his residence in an adjoining mansion. In the fire of 1882 numerous pictures and objects of great value were destroyed, amongst them a portrait of Queen Anne which she had presented to Lord Bingley in remembrance of her visit to Bramham. From the Bensons their estates descended through the female line to the Foxes, with whose name Bramham is most closely connected. The kennels of the world-famous



THE WHARFE AT COLLINGHAM

Bramham Moor pack of fox-hounds are situated in the park, and house about fifty couples.

On the western edge of Bramham Park there are several villages and hamlets well worthy of a visit. A by-road runs from the park to Thorner, an old-world village which has become largely modernised by the extension of the railway system, but which still contains some ancient houses and a fine church of late Gothic architecture. Round about Thorner and the neighbouring village of Scarcroft there are several farmsteads and houses which are worth examination because of their antiquity and rustic surroundings, and at one, known as Moat House, there are the remains of an ancient moat. A little distance beyond this survival of a bygone age lies Bardsey, a village of many charms, but chiefly famous as being the birth-place of William Congreve, the poet and dramatist, who was born at Bardsey

Grange about 1669, in the February of which year he was baptized in Bardsey church. Within the precincts of Bardsey is a high mound, presumably artificial, which at some time has been separated into two portions and joined by a bridge. Three sides of this eminence, which is supposed to have been a Saxon fortress, were protected by a stockade; the fourth by a moat. At the foot of the mound there are traces of a circular fortification which appears to have enclosed a considerable tract of land. The house in which Congreve was born stands near the foot of Castle Hill, as this mound has long been called, and was originally a granary belonging to the monks of Kirkstall, who had here a fish pond, well stocked, and much store of wild fowl. The church, which is chiefly remarkable for its curious tower, contains some Norman work. In the churchyard is a huge block of stone which weighs many tons, and is said to cover the remains of several abbots of Kirkstall who had a residence in the village.

From Rigton, a little hamlet on the by-road from Bardsey to Compton, there are some exceedingly fine views of the surrounding scenery. Rigton, as its name implies, is a place set on the summit of a ridge. It gives one the impression of being far removed from the world—its houses are old and quaint, its street is steep and rough, and its gardens and orchards seem to have been laid out with the view of making as many angles and corners as possible. From the top of the ridge there are wide prospects of Wharfedale from the heath-clad moors beyond Otley and Burley to the pastoral meadows which surround Wetherby. Between here and Compton a magnificent view of East Yorkshire opens out, spreading across the Wolds to the bold country north of the Derwent. Compton, one of the smallest of hamlets, is chiefly remarkable for the discovery in its midst, some fifty or sixty years ago, of the remains of a Roman villa, which comprised a quantity of tessellated pavement, coins, and other remains, together with several British querns, all of which were safely unearthed and removed to the museum of the Yorkshire Philosophical Society at York. Rigton, Bardsey, and Collingham, a village of some size and pretensions, lying in the valley between Compton and Wetherby, at one time formed a royal manor, which was exchanged by Henry II. for the town and forest of Danby, and afterwards re-exchanged during the reign of John. There are several objects of great interest to lovers of the antique at Collingham. A few years ago there were erected in the church two ancient crosses found close by, one of which has a Runic inscription at its base, and the other a sculptured representation of the Twelve Apostles. The discovery of these crosses, which somewhat resemble the fragments at Dewsbury and Thornhill, and are closely akin to those at Ilkley, has led to a supposition that Paulinus preached here at some time, but there is nothing to show that this notion is correct. The church at Collingham possesses an Early English tower, and is prettily situated amongst rich meadows through

which the Wharfe winds in a long curve towards Wetherby, with the highroad running at one side and the railway at the other.

If he should chance to reach Wetherby on any other than a market-day the traveller will wonder at the sense of quiet rest which seems to hang over it, from the bridge which crosses the Wharfe at the foot of the town, to the quaint market-hall, with its curious colonnades, which stands in its midst. It is in all respects an old-fashioned town, grey and quiet, and very suggestive of the days of the stage-coach and the post-chaise. Its inns are roomy and comfortable, and the fact that their walls are liberally adorned with ancient pictures of a sporting nature, and with portraits and prints of famous owners, trainers, and jockeys, is sufficient to prove that Wetherby is first and last a sporting town. It is, indeed, a typical example of the old English market-borough which has not been so much affected and changed by the resistless rush of modern life as to have forgotten its behaviour during the good old days. Although it possesses a railway station, it is still on the

Road, and scarcely be one lingers market-a coach-come gal-the bridge the little liness for a hour while changed sengers re-the old erby was a castle, of which since dis-though its preserved in of its sup-tion, Castle the twelfth was the pro-the Knights



WETHERBY BRIDGE

from whose hands it passed into those of Henry de Lacy. During his possession of it the marauding Scots burned castle and town, together with the neighbouring church of Kirk Deighton. There were various skirmishes and engagements in Wetherby during the Civil War, in which

Great North one would surprised as about its place to see and-four loping over and waking town to live-brief half-horses were and pas-freshed. In days Weth-the site of all trace has long appeared, name is the title posed situa-Garth. In century it perty of Templars,



the Fairfaxes played their usual vigorous part. Leland mentions seeing an ancient cross at Wetherby, which presumably stood in the centre of the market-place. When Cooke was here very early in the present century he speaks of the principal trade of the town as being in flour, the pressing of oil from rape-seed, and the preparation of logwood for the use of clothiers and dyers, and praises the grandeur of the cascade made by the erection of the dam on the Wharfe, which had then and still has the appearance of a waterfall. The parish church of Wetherby, although four hundred years old, is not striking or interesting, and the chief charm of the little town lies in its old-world appearance and in its picturesque situation on the banks of the Wharfe.

## CHAPTER XXX

### The Wharfe from Wetherby to Weston

VIEW FROM CLIFF TOP—KIRKBY OVERBLOW—NETHERBY—GALLOWES HILL  
—HAREWOOD: ITS CASTLE, CHURCH, AND HOUSE—WEARDLEY: THE  
BIRTHPLACE OF JOHN NICHOLSON—ARTHINGTON AND BRAMHOPE—  
WESTON—RIGTON—GREAT ALME'S CLIFF—STAINBURN—POOL BANK—  
FARNLEY PARK—OTLEY CHEVIN—OTLEY—WESTON HALL.

#### I



**O**N the north side of the river Wharfe, in the district lying to the west of Wetherby, a series of by-roads and lanes traverse the head of the ridge which divides Wharfedale from the valley of the Nidd, and from various points of vantage along them there are several fine prospects of the scenery in the country surrounding these two rivers. The traveller will observe that as he goes westward on his journey into the middle stretches of Wharfedale the scenery becomes bolder and wilder, and forms strong contrasts to the pastoral surroundings of the river at Tadcaster. The ground on either side rises to more considerable heights, and assumes irregular contours and outlines which greatly add to the romantic nature of the scenery, while the river itself, winding in picturesque fashion through the midst of a vale which can scarcely be equalled for the richness and vivid colouring of its foliage, helps to make one of the most delightful landscapes in the county. From the eminence known as Cliff Top, a little distance above Collingham on the road from Wetherby to Kirkby Overblow, there is an excellent view of this part of

Wharfedale. The course of the river may be traced for a considerable distance as it winds past the ruins of Harewood Castle and beneath the wooded slopes of Bramhope and Poole to the foot of Otley Chevin. Nearer at hand the curious rock formation known as Great Alme's Cliff, or Orme's Cliff, is seen, sharply outlined against the sky, at the edge of the moors which extend from the western side of the Washburn valley to the head of Beamsley Beacon overlooking Bolton Priory. On a clear day the principal peaks and eminences of the Craven Hills are plainly visible from this point, the general view from which is rendered all the more attractive because of the pastoral character of the valley lying in the immediate foreground.

There is a curious story told in this neighbourhood of the disappearance of a Scotsman, a travelling draper, who was in the habit of frequenting these parts some years ago for the purpose of selling his goods. He was accustomed to make an annual pilgrimage through the Yorkshire dales, commencing his journey at Richmond in Swaledale and extending it to Wharfedale by way of the valleys of the Ure and the Nidd. He had made this journey so many times that there was scarce a market-town, village, or farmstead where he was not known, and it was his general custom to take up his lodgings for the night at one of the latter. On the occasion of his last journey he had travelled from Pateley Bridge towards Wetherby, and when near Sicklinghall he paused to rest at one of his usual stopping-places, Skerry Grange, an ancient farmstead, where he was always a welcome visitor. He supped with the farmer and his wife and stayed there for the night, and next morning after breakfast, at which meal he was noticed to be in the best of health and spirits, and to be in possession of a capital appetite, he shook hands with his entertainers, and departed towards Wetherby. He was passed on the way, plodding along under his pack, by a man who knew him, and with whom he exchanged greetings. After that he was never seen again. His friends in Scotland, finding that he did not return home, instituted a search, and his sons visited the district and made every effort to discover their father, without avail. The wandering Scotsman, whose annual visit had been an event of importance in the year's doings of the lonely farmsteads, had disappeared strangely and mysteriously, and was never seen or heard of afterwards.

At a short distance from Cliff Top the traveller will perceive the village of Kirkby Overblow, a place of great interest, standing on the summit of the ridge which divides Wharfedale from Nidderdale. Its church and churchyard, which are on an elevation of nearly 400 feet above sea-level, abound with features of interest. The church is a fine specimen of the Perpendicular style, and is embowered in tall elm trees above which rises the tower, from the battlements of which there are views so wide-spreading and extensive that they include the whole of the surrounding country from Knaresborough to Selby, with glimpses into the valleys of the Wharfe, the Nidd, the Ouse, and the Derwent.

Although it has been restored of late years, there is a quantity of ancient work in the church, including a devil's door, a piscina, two middle-pointed windows of the thirteenth century, and some undressed stone work, presumably Saxon, in the north wall. There are some fragments



OLD GATEWAY, MANOR HOUSE, KIRKBY OVERBLOW

of an ancient cross in the churchyard which is supposed to have been of Celtic origin, and the tombstones contain several curious epitaphs which appear to have been the composition of rural rhymesters. Outside the village there is a venerable mansion which at some period has been surrounded by a moat, and was evidently a place of importance at one time. It is now called Low Hall, and some of its oak panelling, furniture, and carved work has been removed, but it still possesses many interesting features. On the opposite side of Kirkby Overblow

there is another ancient house, Barraby Grange, where two British querns were found some years ago. Near this place the Earls of Northumbria had a fortress overlooking the Wharfe, and its sight is still traceable at the elevation called Morkere or Morcar Hill, after the ill-fated Earl who played a principal part during the troublous times of the Conquest. Of the actual castle or stronghold nothing remains, but there are traces of its enclosure, which seems to have been a ring-fence, strengthened by a moat, surrounding at least thirty acres of ground. At a little distance, and in closer proximity to the river, lie the picturesque hamlets of Netherby, Kearby, and Chapel Hill. Kearby used to be famous as the scene of a country merry-making, to which all the prettiest maidens of the district made a point of resorting, and at which, it is said, more marriages were arranged than at any similar gathering in the Riding. At Netherby there is an ancient ford through the Wharfe which is safe enough in good weather, but very dangerous in bad, and has consequently been the scene of more than one disaster. From this ford a road climbs the valley to the highway connecting Wetherby with Harewood. At Stockton, close by their intersection, it is said there was a Saxon village of some importance built on the site of a previous encamp-

ment of Roman origin. Here at various times early British remains, chiefly querns, have been discovered. Another spot of some historical significance is the eminence rising between Stockton and Harewood which bears the name of Gallows Hill. At this point was erected the gallows of the Lords of Harewood Castle, who doubtless showed their power and authority by hanging thereon a goodly number of the unfortunate folk whose lot it was to live within their domains.

## II

Harewood, which occupies a singularly advantageous situation on high ground overlooking the south bank of the Wharfe, is without doubt one of the finest places not only in Yorkshire but in England, and there is little wonder that the travellers and holiday-makers who flock into Wharfedale or to the fashionable watering-place of Harrogate, close by, during the summer, should visit its beauties and glories in such large numbers, or that the townfolk of Leeds—which lies but a few miles away—should repair there for the enjoyment of fresh air and pleasant scenes. Until Harewood has been seen it cannot be appreciated in a proper degree—it is one of those places of which no description worthy of the subject can be given. The remarks made upon it nearly a century ago by Whitaker, who spoke of it as “a fortunate place, blessed with much natural beauty and fertility, possessed of one of the most beautiful villages in the county, a nearly entire, though dismantled castle, a modern palace surrounded by a wide extent of pleasure-grounds and plantations, and a parish church filled with unmutilated sculptures of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries,”



are as true to-day as when they were written. Harewood indeed, with its ancient castle, its magnificent mansion, its fine old church, and its picturesque and well-kept village, is a place in which the traveller will feel tempted to linger for some time ere exchanging positive for unknown delights.

The highroad from Wetherby runs into the midst of the glories of Harewood—the village on one hand, the park, house, and church on another, the old castle a little distance away along the road to Otley. It is a delightful scene which meets the eye on pausing in the broad, clean village street, flanked as it is on one side by the neatest of cottages, the most attractive of gardens, gay with the plants and flowers beloved of the rustic mind, and on the other by the luxuriant trees which rise high above the wall of the park. On those days when all Harewood—house, park, picture-galleries, church, and castle—is open to the world and his wife, it is somewhat difficult to know at what exact point one should commence an inspection of its various show-places. It seems most natural, however, to turn first to the old castle of Harewood, as being the germ from whence modern Harewood's magnificence sprang. The remains of the castle stand on the slope of the hill at the northern extremity of the village, looking down upon the south bank of the Wharfe winding through the valley lying a mile beneath. They form a fine pile of weather-beaten stones, and are singularly complete, despite their age. From the high ground on which the castle stands there are wide and magnificent views of Wharfedale and the Craven Hills, and it is not difficult to imagine the scenes which must have centred round it in the days when knights and squires and men-at-arms rode up the steep road from the valley to enter through the port-cullised gateway over which still appears the motto of the castle's founder—

*Dat Sal Be Sal.*

At the time of the Domesday Survey Harewood belonged to the Crown, and was valued at forty shillings. Tor, Spot, and Grim held here ten carucates of land, of which five were arable. There does not appear to have been either church or priest or mill here at that time, and the place was probably of small importance until, by the gift of the Conqueror, it passed into the possession of Robert de Romillé, and by the marriage of his only daughter Cecily into the hands of William de Meschines, Earl of Chester, and his successors, who also inherited in the female line. It passed through various hands during the next three centuries, and seems to have increased in importance, for it was valued about 1336 at 400 marks per annum. It was then the property of the Lises, from whom it passed to Sir William Aldburgh, who married Elizabeth, the only daughter of Robert, Lord Lisle. He it was who built the present castle on the site of a previous one erected soon after the Conquest. At his death, Harewood was divided in moieties between his daughters Elizabeth and Sybil, the

former being then the wife of Sir Richard Redman, and the latter the wife of Sir William Ryther. The Redmans made the castle their chief residence until the reign of Elizabeth, when they and the Rythers disposed of the entire property to the Gascoignes of Gawthorpe, who emparked about two thousand acres of ground. The last of the male Gascoignes, William, left the estates to his daughter, Margaret, who married Thomas Wentworth. From this marriage sprang the Earls of Strafford, the second of whom sold Harewood during the Commonwealth. It seems then to have passed into the hands of Sir John Cutler, the miser immortalised by Alexander Pope in the following passage:—

“Cutler saw tenants break and houses fall;  
 For very want he could not build a wall;  
 His only daughter in a stranger's power;  
 For very want he could not pay a dower;  
 A few gray hairs his reverend temples crowned;  
 'Twas very want that sold them for two pound!  
 What e'en denied a cordial at his end,  
 Banished the doctor, and expelled the friend?  
 What but a want—which you perhaps think mad,  
 Yet numbers feel—the want of what he had!”

The penurious habits of this strange person were so pronounced that he sold the timber out of his ancient castle from pure greed. He was succeeded by his daughter Elizabeth, Countess of Radnor, from whom, she dying without issue, it passed to her kinsman, John Boulter, who sold it in 1720 to Henry Lascelles, the ancestor of the present owner. His son Edwin built the mansion called Harewood House in 1760, and was created Baron Harewood in 1790. The earldom of Harewood was conferred upon his successor in 1812, with the further title of Viscount Lascelles, which has since been used as a courtesy-title by the eldest son. With the family of Lascelles everything that is modern at Harewood is closely identified—their wealth and taste have combined to make the place what it is.

According to Grainge, a chief authority on the castles and abbeys of the county, the castle of Harewood as it presents itself to the modern student may be described as a large square tower, or series of towers, without bridge, moat, or other outworks, which depended for security on the height and strength of its walls, which are built of freestone, and are of good masonry. It is of a parallelogramic form, and the length of the north front is 54 feet; of the south, 67 feet; of the east, 111 feet; and of the west, 123 feet. The walls are about 7 feet in thickness. The north face is plain without projecting towers, three storeys in height, the two lower being lighted only by narrow loopholes, and the uppermost by large square windows, which have been divided by a mullion and a transom.

The great entrance is through a projecting square tower on the eastern side, and the groove of the portcullis is yet to be seen in the wall. Outside this tower, over a square-headed window, which lighted the private chapel, the motto of Sir William Aldburgh, "Vat Sal Be Sal," is boldly carved in old English letters, flanked by a lion rampant on the shield of Aldburgh on one side, and the orle on the shield of Baliol on the other; the latter being placed there, it is presumed, as a compliment to the great Scottish warrior, who found refuge at Harewood when driven from his throne. Inside the oratory or private chapel there are the faint traces of the shields of arms of the ancient families of Sutton, Aldburgh, Baliol, Thweng, Bordesley, Constable, Ross, and Vipont. On the north side of the tower a winding staircase leads to the top of the castle. The western front has another entrance, a plain doorway, to the great hall. The south front is the loftiest of the four, and has watch-towers at the corners which project half their breadth from the main wall. The interior of the castle is not particularly interesting save to the erudite in architecture and archæology—the casual observer will be chiefly struck by the fact that the windows of the great hall are mere loopholes, and that the place must have usually been in semi-darkness. In a recess at the upper end of the west wall of this room there used to be an object which for a long time was held to be a tomb, but was in all probability a sideboard. The recess is  $5\frac{1}{2}$  feet in length and  $3\frac{1}{2}$  in depth; the arch above it is circular, ornamented on the face with floral decorations; a pointed crocketed canopy, surmounted by a finial, rises above, and a square canopy covers the whole. On the object once considered to be a stone coffin there are carvings of vine leaves and grapes, and as the recess is close to where the high table stood, there seems no doubt that it sheltered a sideboard used for serving purposes.

Few churches, ancient or modern, are so beautifully situated as that of Harewood, which is literally embowered in trees and foliage, and occupies a fittingly secluded position. It was originally founded by William de Curci in the reign of Henry I., and the fabric was completed about 1116. It was in the gift of the lords of the manor until 1353, when John de Insula, or Lisle, brought about its appropriation to the prior and monks of Bolton, who thereafter exercised the rights of patronage. As Harewood church now stands, it consists of nave, aisles, and chancel, with a square tower, buttressed and battlemented, at the west end. The aisles are divided by buttresses into five bays, and there are buttresses at the corners of the chancel. This church, which is dedicated to the Holy Cross, is perhaps superior to any parish church in England for the perfect preservation of its tombs and monuments, of which it possesses a large number. The most interesting and important of these is that of Sir William Gascoigne—the incorruptible judge—and his wife. Sir William was born at Gawthorpe in this parish, and was Chief Justice of the King's Bench in the reign of

Henry IV. He is chiefly celebrated in history for his stern integrity and strong sense of justice, and for his resolute punishment of the Prince of Wales, afterwards Henry V., who dared to question his judgment on a court favourite, and for his refusal to try Scrope, Archbishop of York, on the charge of high treason. His tomb bears the effigies of himself and his wife, who was the daughter and co-heiress of Sir William Mowbray of Kirklington, and at one time was surrounded by a brass filleting which is said to have been torn away during the Civil War, though



THE GASCOIGNE TOMB, HAREWOOD CHURCH

Fuller in his "Worthies of England" seems to imply that he actually saw it in position. The wording engraved upon it ran as follows:—

*Hic jacet Will—mus Gascoigne nup: Capt. Justic de Banco Henrici nup. regis Angliæ quartæ et Elizabethæ uxor ejus qui quidem Will—mus obiit die Dominica VI<sup>o</sup> die Decembris, Anno D—ni mccccxii—xib Henrici IV, factus judex mcccci.*

There are several other tombs in the church which are interesting, not only because of their association with Harewood, but for the beauty of their design and workmanship. That between the chancel and the north aisle is in all probability the tomb of Elizabeth, one of the daughters and co-heiresses of Sir William Aldburgh, and of her husband, Sir Richard Redman, whose crest, a horse's head, appears amongst the ornamentation. Opposite to this is another tomb which is presumed to be that of the other co-heiress, Sybil, and her husband, Sir William Ryther. Another tomb—the subject of very careful examination by Glover when he came here in carrying out his heraldic visitation in 1585, and noted by him as follows:—"In Harewood Church, north aisle, belonging to Harewood Castle, an altar-tomb: effigies of a knight and lady cumbent, his head on helmet, and



crest, a horse's head, which denotes it to have been a Redman; feet on lion, on which sits a monk with beads, against which sole of the right foot rests"—is supposed to be that of a later Sir Richard Redman, grandson of the Sir Richard who married Elizabeth, and of yet another Elizabeth, his wife, daughter of Sir William Gascoigne of Gawthorpe. In the south aisle, at the foot of the Gascoigne tomb, is another altar-tomb, about which



some doubt prevails. By the arms and crest—gules, a saltire argent, and a bull's head—some authorities take it to be that of Sir John Neville, of Womersley, whose daughter Joan married a Gascoigne, but others suppose it to commemorate either a Frank of Alwoodley or a Thwaites. In addition to the altar-tombs, the effigies on which are all beautifully preserved, the church possesses some fine mural monuments and ancient gravestones, of which the most important is that commemorating another famous judge, Sir Thomas Denison, who died in 1765, and whose epitaph was written by the great Lord Mansfield.

The ancient house of Gawthorpe, where Lord Chief Justice Gascoigne was born, occupied a position in close proximity to the present Harewood House, and was presumably restored more than once during the centuries which elapsed ere Edwin Lascelles began the erection of the modern mansion. There is an interesting account of it in an advertisement dated 1656, wherein it is described as—

“Gawthorp Hall, most part of the walles built with good stone, and all the houses covered with slate, and a great part of that new building, four rooms in the ould building, all waynscotted, fyve large roomes in the

new building, all waynscotted, likewise and collored like walnut tree, the matereals of which house, if sould, would raise 500*l.* at least. To this belongeth a park, in former tymes stored with deere ; a park-like place it is, and a brook running through the middle of it, which turns 4 payer of millstones at 2 milles. The stank, or pond, at Gawthorp is well stored with trout, roch, gudgeon, and eyles."

It was in this park in March 1759 that the foundation-stone of the present Harewood House was laid by Edwin Lascelles, who employed Adams, of London, and Carr, of York, as architects, and the famous Capability Brown as landscape gardener. The house was twelve years in building, and cost *£*100,000. It is a magnificent building in the Corinthian style, about 250 feet in length, and over 80 in width, and consists of a centre and two wings. The front has a fine portico and pediment, supported by pillars, and the entire appearance of the exterior is vast and imposing. The surrounding pleasure-grounds and gardens cover 150 acres, and the park which encloses them and the house is 1800 acres in extent. The interior of Harewood House is on a like scale of magnificence with the exterior. The principal apartments are lofty, spacious, and richly furnished, and the ceilings, modelled by Rose and painted by Zucchi and Rebecchi, are noted for the beauty of their design and execution. There is a fine collection of family portraits here which includes examples of Reynolds, Jackson, and Hopner, and there are also fine busts of Pitt, Newton, Dante, Petrarch, and others, and a famous collection of china, which was formed by the eldest son of the first Earl of Harewood, who predeceased his father by six years.

### III

At the foot of the steep hill on which the old castle of Harewood stands, the highroad from Leeds to Harrogate is carried across the Wharfe by Harewood Bridge, a massive structure of four arches, built of a grey stone which consorts admirably with the prevailing tints around it. Here the river widens a good deal, and from this point westward indulges in greater freedom of action—and, consequently, becomes more attractive—than in the previous stages of its course. On each side of the Wharfe at this point there are places and objects which should receive the traveller's attention ere he goes forward to the bold scenery which overhangs the river at Otley Chevin. On the south bank the hamlet of Weardley and the village of Arthington both contain features of more than common interest ; on the north, the villages of Weeton and Rigton, and the massive rocks of Great Alme's Cliff are worth going on pilgrimage for. Indeed, there is scarcely any corner of this district which is not rich in stores of historical or topographical information, or from which some curious bit of folk-lore may be delved. Weardley is said to be built on the site of a Roman camp, the earthworks and mounds of which are still pointed out.

At the time of the Domesday Survey the lands of Weardley and Weeton, across the river, were linked together in the occupancy of Gospatric, and were valued in the Confessor's time at twenty-five shillings, and laid waste under the Conqueror. At Weardley in 1790 was born John Nicholson, the Airedale Poet, whose life was a striking example of the fact that it is not an unmixed blessing to be born in possession of the rhyming faculty. Nicholson's father was a worsted manufacturer, who married the daughter of a farmer at Eldwick, near Bingley, and removed there soon after his son's birth. The latter first attended a school on Rombald's Moor, kept by a man who also followed the occupation of besom-maker, but he was afterwards sent to Bingley Grammar School, where he remained twelve months. He appears to have given no proof of poetical ability until 1818, when he wrote a lampoon on a Bradford doctor. He subsequently produced two plays at the Bradford theatre, and in 1824 published his poem entitled "Airedale," which met with considerable applause, and passed into a second edition by the following year. Unfortunately for its author, his head seems to have been somewhat turned by his success, and he gave up his employment and took to travelling about the country hawking his work. At the same time he contracted intemperate habits and became improvident in his mode of living. He had a staunch friend and patron, however, in Mr. George Lane Fox, of Bramham, and often turned to him for help, which was always willingly given. Nicholson published another volume of poems, entitled "The Lyre of Ebor," in 1827. From that time until his death in 1843 he lived a chequered existence. His death occurred under very sad circumstances. It had been his custom for several years to spend a public holiday in revisiting the scenes of his youth at Eldwick, and to travel to that place on the previous evening of the day so observed. On the evening of Good Friday, 1843, he set out from Bradford with his usual intention, and progressed as far as Shipley, where he remained until midnight at a friend's house. He left there for Eldwick but was never seen alive again. His dead body was found on the bank of the Aire at the point where Saltaire now stands, and it was supposed that he had fallen from the stepping-stones into the river, and had afterwards dragged himself to the bank. A monument to his memory was erected in Bingley churchyard by Mr. George Lane Fox, and in the year of his death a collected edition of his verses was issued, which was republished in 1859. Nicholson is said to have been a frank, open-hearted, good-natured man, incapable of deceit or meanness, and his work testifies to his intense love of Nature and his powers of observing her various moods. It is somewhat singular that a mere accident should have transferred him in infancy from Wharfedale to Airedale, and there can be little doubt that had he remained at Weardley he would have celebrated the glories of his native valley rather than those of the dale of which he was, after all, but a son of adoption.

The village of Arthington, on the highroad between Harewood and

Otley, enjoys one of the pleasantest situations in Wharfedale, and though it is now best known as being the very modern junction of two important lines of railway, it has a history of considerable antiquity. There was here a house of Cluniac Nuns, founded by Peter de Arthington in Stephen's time, and afterwards patronised by that very great lady, Alice de Romillé, who graciously permitted the nuns to feed forty hogs in her wood of Swindon, across the river, during the time of harvest. There are no traces of this religious house left, but its site is pointed out as having been in a meadow running down to the Wharfe, wherein there is a spring called the Nun's Well. Arthington Hall is a finely situated mansion of ancient appearance, and its porch bears date 1585, and Creskeld Hall, close by, is another house of considerable interest and antiquity. High above these houses and above the village of Arthington with its busy railway station rises a bold eminence, thickly wooded, on the summit of which is a delightfully situated village named Bramhope. The long line of high ground which runs westward from this point forms the watershed of the Wharfe on one side and of the Aire on the other, and magnificent views of each valley may be obtained from the outskirts of the village. Almost underneath the houses of Bramhope lies one of the longest railway tunnels in England, which pierces the great hill dividing Airedale from Wharfedale. The railway traveller from Leeds to Harrogate takes his last glimpse of Airedale as he rushes into the tunnel a little distance just beyond Horsforth; his first of Wharfedale as the train draws up at Arthington, just beyond the tunnel's northern extremity. A nervous person might well be excused certain feelings of fear in travelling through Bramhope Tunnel, which is



Arthington

about three miles in length, and of an aspect terrifying enough to frighten the bravest. In making it there was a considerable loss of life, and soon after the completion of the work a monument was placed in Otley church-yard which bore the following inscription :—

“IN MEMORY OF THE UNFORTUNATE MEN WHO LOST THEIR LIVES WHILE ENGAGED IN THE CONSTRUCTION OF THE BRAMHOPE TUNNEL OF THE LEEDS AND THIRSK RAILWAY, FROM 1845 TO 1849. THIS TOMB IS ERECTED AS A MEMORIAL AT THE EXPENSE OF JAMES BRAY, ESQ., THE CONTRACTOR, AND OF THE AGENTS, SUB-CONTRACTORS, AND WORKMEN EMPLOYED THEREON. *I am a stranger and a sojourner with you ; give me a possession of a burying-place with you that I may bury my dead out of your sight. Of those eighteen upon whom the Tower in Siloam fell and slew them, think ye that they were sinners above all the men in Jerusalem ? I tell you, nay ; and except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish.*”

Across the valley, which the railway spans at Arthington by means of a viaduct of remarkable size, the massive group of rocks known as Great Alme's Cliff rises at an elevation which makes it a conspicuous object even when viewed from the high ground about Bramhope. Between it and the latter place there are several villages and hamlets which are interesting in one way or another, and the country in which they are situated is full of charm. Few more startling contrasts of scenery can be obtained anywhere than that which the railway traveller, journeying northwards from Leeds, is presented to as he leaves the gloom of Bramhope Tunnel for his first glimpse of Wharfedale at Arthington. Leeds, with its smoke and bustle, and long rows of uniform streets, is only a few miles on the other side of the ridge which separates Airedale from Wharfedale, and the traveller has scarce passed its last suburb ere he enters the great tunnel, from which he presently emerges to find himself gazing on one of the most romantic scenes in the county. To his right the valley of the Wharfe winds away towards Harewood and Wetherby ; to his left it is overshadowed by the almost precipitous bulk of Otley Chevin, and walled in in the far distance by the dark moors which cover the high ground between Ilkley and Skipton. On both sides the valley is richly wooded ; there is not a sign of manufactures or of anything to disturb the pastoral beauty of the scene, and the vegetation is luxurious, whether it be in the hedgerows which separate one field from another, or in the gardens which front the farmsteads and cottages. The hamlets seen on either side the line at this point are old-world places in more senses than one. On the east side of the railway lies Weston, a tiny little place whose history goes back to Saxon times, built on a rivulet which leads down to the Wharfe at a point near Rougemont, once the home of the great mediæval family of De Insula or De Lisle. On the west is another hamlet of small dimensions, Castley, lying at the foot of Great Alme's Cliff. This, the original home of the

family of Castley, was a fortified camp in the days of the Roman occupation, and faint traces of the earthworks are still perceivable. A little further along the west side of the railway lies Huby, another hamlet of small size but great antiquity, which was in the possession of Hubba the Dane long before the Norman Conquest. Still further northward, and perched on the high ground dividing Wharfedale from Nidderdale, is another Rigton, an ancient village, whose inhabitants were much harassed by the Scottish marauders in the fourteenth century.

High above these quiet places, and above the railway line which has broken in upon the valley's peace and retirement, towers the group of rocks called Great Alme's Cliff, from the summit of which there are magnificent views of the surrounding country. Various opinions have been given as to the derivation of the name of this remarkable landmark, which is conspicuous over the greater part of Wharfedale and its immediate district. One authority gives it as coming from *al*, a rock, and *mias*, an altar; another declares the correct name to be Ormscliff, derived from some connection with Orm, the son of Gamel. These rocks are said to have been the scene of the celebration of Druidical rites, and the curious basin-like cavities in their surface are believed to have been originally formed by the Druids as receptacles for rain-water and used in the performance of various ceremonies. Around them a good deal of rustic superstition has gathered at one time or another. One of the receptacles was believed to have miraculous power in the curing of warts. The person affected came to it, cut or pricked the excrescences until they bled, and then plunged their hands into the water. Another superstition was that good luck would result from the dropping of pins into these cavities, and it was at one time a regular custom amongst the country people hereabouts to indulge in this curious practice. A strange escape from death was noted here in 1776, when a young woman resident in Rigton came to Great Alme's Cliff intent upon healing a wounded heart by committing suicide. She leapt from the summit of the principal rock, which is 50 feet in height, but a strong wind blowing at the time inflated her gown, forming it into a parachute, and she descended in safety, utterly cured, according to the local chroniclers, of her foolish fancies. Between Great Alme's Cliff and the head of the high ground overlooking the valley of the Washburn, there is a quaint, old-world village called Stainburn, which possesses an ancient church of undoubted Norman architecture. It stands in the midst of fields, and consists of nave and chancel, with a circular arch between them, and its font is at least seven hundred years old.

#### IV

From Arthington the Wharfe passes into a stretch of country which differs considerably from its previous surroundings. On the south side the land begins to assume steeper and severer elevations, and on the north

appears the first fringe of the heath-clad moorlands, while at the furthest extremity of the valley on which the eye rests, the dark mass of Rombald's Moor closes in the view, and shows where the valley of the Wharfe is divided from that of the Aire. From this point the traveller may promise himself delights and pleasures such as he has not yet seen in the county of broad acres. The highroad runs by the side of the river from Pool to Bolton Priory, and almost close to it from that point to Burnsall, from whence the two are scarcely separated until the last stretches of Upper Wharfedale are reached. At Pool, a pretty wayside village just outside Arthington, there is good promise of the developing beauty of the valley. The high ground on the south, known as Pool Bank, down which the Bradford and Harrogate highroad descends very steeply, is covered with luxurious vegetation, which gradually melts away into the wild, craggy sweep of the overhanging hill called Otley Chevin. From the head of Pool Bank, as from any point along the ridge which stretches from Bramhope to Menston, there are far-reaching views of Wharfedale, and from Pool Bridge there is a delightful prospect of the fertile meadowland which surrounds the meeting of the Wharfe and the Washburn. Hereabouts the traveller has many temptations to linger—there are so many matters to attract and hold his attention, and so much of natural beauty on every side, that his progress is constantly impeded, and his feet are less willing to hasten onward.

A little distance from Pool Bridge, in an angle formed on the north bank of the Wharfe by the meeting of that river and its beautiful tributary, the Washburn, lies Farnley Park, sloping upward to the old house wherein Turner found a home, warm friendship, and a storehouse for much of his finest work. This is one of the great shrines of Yorkshire, hallowed and consecrated by thoughts and memories of the famous artist and of his friend, Walter Fawkes. "Farnley Hall," says Mr. Ruskin, "is a unique place: there is nothing like it in the world—a place where a great genius was loved and appreciated, who did all his best work for the place, and where it is treasured up like a monument in a shrine." The surroundings of Farnley are everything that the soul of a great artist, and especially of a landscape painter, could desire. It is little wonder that Turner made this a home and did some of his best work under its roof. During the constant visits which he paid to Farnley Hall between the years 1803–1820 he made numerous drawings of rooms in the house, of the porches, gateways, and gardens, and of birds shot on the estate during his stay. These formed the nucleus of the celebrated Turner collection for which the Hall afterwards became famous. To them were added the magnificent series of water-colour studies of views on the Rhine, in Switzerland, Italy, and in England, and a number of the master's finest works in oil, purchased by Walter Fawkes, who was as generous as a patron as he was true and loyal as a friend. For Farnley and its then owner, Turner always cherished a great affection, and it is related of him that he never

cared to visit the Hall again after his friend's death, and never spoke of the Wharfe without betraying his emotion. The house, which is chiefly in the Elizabethan style of architecture, with some modern additions in strict keeping, occupies an elevated position on a plateau overlooking the extensive park and the river at its southern edge, and commands a magnificent view of Otley Chevin, rising beyond the valley in front. Everything that taste, art, and money could do has been done to make it what it is—one of the most remarkable dwelling-houses in the country. The gateway at the garden



FARNLEY HALL

entrance was brought here from Menston Hall; the stone table on the terrace, from which Cromwell is said to have dined after the battle of Marston Moor, came from the same ancient house; the porch of the hall door once stood at Newall Old Hall, close by; and the oriel windows were brought here from Lindley, once the home of the old family of Palmes. All around the house are delightful prospects of the surrounding country, north, south, east, and west. The romantic valley of the Washburn begins at the foot of the eminence on which the house is built; behind the rising ground at the back stretch the moors which extend in unbroken solitude to far beyond Pateley Bridge. The park itself is a paradise of rural delight wherein the lover of nature might wander for long days without exhausting all that it can give of pleasure and instruction, and the Wharfe, flowing at its foot, keeps itself in touch with the spirit of the place by assuming the most pastoral of its many aspects. In addition to the collection of pictures



which he left there—not so complete now as it once was—Farnley Hall contains numerous other articles of great interest. There is a hat here which is said to have belonged to Oliver Cromwell, together with the sword which he wore at Marston Moor, and a watch presumably carried by him on the same occasion ; a sword which belonged to General Lambert ; a cup made from one of Sir Thomas Fairfax's boots ; a chimney-piece made from the oak bedstead which James I. occupied when he stayed at Hawksworth Hall, a few miles away ; and a letter from Charles I. to Thomas Fawkes, dated April 14, 1626, in which his Majesty requests the loan of £13, 6s. 8d.

The Fawkeses of Farnley are famous amongst Yorkshire families by reason of their ancient descent. They came originally from Avignon in France, and one of their number helped to garrison the castle of Bedford against Henry III. When the siege was over and the defenders at Henry's mercy, he hanged every one of them save Fawkes, whom he banished to France. A William Fawkes was lord of the manor of Farnley in 1290. In the reign of Henry VIII. a Nicholas Fawkes married Anne Hawksworth, of Hawksworth Hall, on the opposite side of the Wharfe, and from that time until 1786 there was a regular succession of Fawkeses, but in that year Francis Fawkes died without issue, and left the estate to his kinsman, Walter Hawksworth, who assumed the name of Fawkes. The story of the ultimate fusing of the two ancient families of Fawkes and Hawksworth into one reads like a romance more than a sober narrative. The Hawksworths, according to Thoresby, were of an antiquity and dignity not second to that of the Fawkeses, and had resided at the place which bears their name from the time of the Conquest. Between the sixteenth and eighteenth centuries, during the first of which there was a marriage between members of their respective families, the Fawkeses and Hawksworths were doubtless in the position of near neighbours and kinsmen. Hawksworth Hall occupies a magnificent position on the brow of a hill winding from Wharfedale towards Airedale, and commands views of both valleys, from either of which it is easily approached. A house of antique charm and many associations, it was tenanted a little over a century ago by Walter Hawksworth at the time that he succeeded to the Fawkes family estates, and it is in the story of his inheritance of them that the romantic aspect of the matter is found. Francis Fawkes, who died in 1786, was the last male of his race in the direct line, and in due course the estates should have passed to his cousin Vavasour of Weston, the son of his father's sister, but it was found on his demise that he had left them to Walter Hawksworth, his relative on his mother's side. The reason for this apparently strange departure from recognised custom is shown in the following narrative :—It happened that Francis Fawkes, when a young man, was out hunting one day, and being in the neighbourhood of Weston Hall, on the west side of Otley, then the residence of his paternal aunt, Mrs. Vavasour, he turned in there for rest

and refreshment. As luck would have it a dinner party was being given at Weston Hall that night, and the final preparations for it were being made when the young squire of Farnley, splashed with mud from head to foot, was seen approaching the house. Mrs. Vavasour caught sight of him, and told one of the domestics to show him into the servants' hall, where she presently joined him. Fawkes perceived that there were great doings toward, and that his aunt had no mind that he should share in them, and though she pressed him to drink a tankard of their best ale and to taste the cook's cream cheese, he saw through the ruse, and left the house without delay. From Weston he rode straight across the valley to Hawksworth. There he met with a very different reception. The best room in the house was ordered to be prepared for him, and Mr. Hawksworth insisted that he should stay and dine, saying that they had a few trout out of the Aire, some grouse, and a fawn, which had just been put down to the fire. Fawkes replied that he was in no mood for feasting, and that the reason of his hurried visit was that he wished to borrow money. He was in want of three hundred guineas there and then—would they lend him that sum? Without question or demur Mr. and Mrs. Hawksworth immediately set to work collecting what cash they had in the house, and making up the sum asked for in various coins, placed the whole in a bag and handed it to Fawkes, refusing to take the note-of-hand which he offered to give them in acknowledgment. Fawkes then left them hurriedly, saying that he would see them again ere long. At the end of three months he returned the bag to them unopened, and told them that his strange conduct had been merely a trial of their friendship. He then devised his estates to the Hawksworths, and it is said that he was so anxious to avoid any possibility of the Vavasours succeeding to them that he executed no less than twenty-five wills in the next twenty-five years, all of which were couched in the same terms.

From Farnley Hall the traveller may proceed to Otley by either of two ways—along the path by the riverside, or down the road which runs at the back of the park, between the hall and the church. The path by the river is pleasantest on a fine evening in summer, but the road is picturesque and winding, and affords good views of the eastern spurs of Rombald's Moor. Both road and path lead to Otley Bridge—a fine structure of seven arches, beneath which the Wharfe, a refreshing contrast in its purity to its polluted sisters, the Aire and the Calder, runs swirling and rippling to meet and receive the Washburn. This bridge was built in 1673, after a previous bridge had been swept away by a great flood. Of this occurrence there is an interesting record in the registers of the parish church of Otley, worded as follows:—

“Sept. 11th, 1673.—This summer is remarkable for the abundant and continual rain therein. On the 11th of this month, there was a wonderful inundation of waters in the northern parts. This river of Wharfe was never

known to be so big, within the memory of man, by a full yard in height, running up in a direct line to Hall Hill Well. It overturned Kettlewell Bridge, Burnsey (Burnsall) Bridge, Barden Bridge, Bolton Bridge, Ilkley Bridge, and Otley Bridge. It also swept away Pool Low Fulling Mills, and carried them down whole, like a ship. It left neither corn nor cattle on the coast thereof."

It needs little perception on the part of the traveller as he passes into the market-place at Otley to recognise that he is in the heart of an ancient market-town. The general aspect of the place is quaint, old-fashioned, and in many respects venerable. The old church, the picturesque manor house, the roomy inns, the wooden-benched market-cross, and the old-fashioned houses on every side bespeak an antiquity which cannot be mistaken. As a matter of fact, Otley has been a market-town for at least fifteen hundred years, and that it has an antiquity equal to that of the oldest towns, is proved by the fact that its ecclesiastical history goes back to the seventh century, and that long before that it had been a Roman station. It is said that Paulinus preached here during his mission in the north, and that the church was originally built at his instigation. After the battle of Brunanburh in 937, Otley was given by Æthelstan to the Archbishops of York, who built a palace here which stood between the market-place and the river bank. A charter for a yearly fair, to be held on the vigil and feast of St. Mary Magdalene, was granted to it by Henry III. in 1223. Its church was half-burnt by the Scottish marauders in 1318, and the marks of the fire are still perceivable on the walls. Its Grammar School was founded early in the seventeenth century, and its institutions and charities possess a pleasant flavour of antiquity. There was an asylum for lepers here in the reign of Edward II., but all trace of it has long been lost. As Otley stands to-day it is a pleasant, old-fashioned town, unspoilt by modern improvements, with wide streets, and a general air of rusticity which is much heightened on market-days, when it is filled with the folk from the neighbouring dales and moorlands, who on these occasions see more faces in an hour than they see in a year in their own solitudes.

The parish church of Otley, which is dedicated to All Saints, forms the principal object in its principal street, Kirkgate, from which it is approached by a few steps leading through a stone archway. It is a structure of some size, and is made picturesque by the ivy which clings about its walls. It was restored in 1870, but still retains its early Norman doorway. The interior is full of interest. The transepts were originally private chapels, that on the south being known as the Denton choir, and that on the north as the Lindley choir. There are numerous monuments and tombs of exceptional interest in the church, amongst them being those of the families of Fairfax, Fawkes, Vavasour, Palmes, and Pulleyne. The most interesting is that of the first Lord Fairfax and his wife Helen, which takes the shape of an altar-tomb, highly sculptured and ornamented, whereon rest the

effigies of the persons commemorated. Lord Fairfax is represented in full armour, his head rests on his helmet, and a lion crouches at his feet ; his lady is habited in a gown of severe cut, with a deep ruff about her neck,



Otley Market-Place

and a frilled hood covering her head. On the plinth beneath her effigy is carved the following legend :—

“ HERE LEAH’S FRUITFULNESS, HERE RACHEL’S BEAUTY,  
HERE LYETH REBECCA’S FAITH, HERE SARAH’S DUTY.”

Until the middle of the present century the silken standard carried by the Parliamentarian standard-bearer at the battle of Marston Moor used to depend over the Fairfax tombs in this church, with the following inscription in Roman letters appearing beneath it :—

“ For we shall all have to appear before the judgment of Christ,  
to give an account of the things done in the body whether they  
be good or evil.”

The chancel contains some interesting tablets and some handsome

crocketed work, and there is a notable monument in the shape of a cross to the Lindleys and the Palmes of Lindley, which shows the figure of a knight recumbent with clasped hands, above a Latin epitaph. There are also in this church some fine fragments of Saxon crosses, similar in design and execution to those at Ilkley, though by no means so well preserved. Other memorials of the past which are worthy the traveller's attention are the ancient Court House in Manor Square, with its quaint windows and picturesque architecture, the house called the Old Hall, at Newhall, just across the bridge, which was once a splendid mansion with fine terraces and gardens, and is now falling into a ruinous condition, and the eminence near the cemetery where the lords of the manor used to punish criminals

with death, and which is accordingly called Gallows Hill to this day. Of Otley as a modern town it needs only to be said that it is still the principal market-town of its district, and the centre of a Parliamentary division. Hundreds of years ago it used to return two members of its own to the mediæval parliaments, but its folks of that time found it somewhat expensive to take part in the deliberations of the nation, and so they petitioned Henry VI. to relieve them of the honour.

The great hill which rises on the south-east of Otley, looming up like a mighty wall from the very edge of the town, derives its name of the Chevin from the Celtic word *Kefn*, a ridge. It is an easy matter to mount to its



summit from Airedale, either by way of Bramhope at one extremity, or of Guiseley at another, but to climb it from Otley means the attempting of an exceedingly wearying feat. It is not until the feat is actually essayed, however, that one begins to find how precipitous the Chevin is. Seen from Otley market-place it presents a peculiarly fine appearance—its masses of rock, which jut out boldly at all points, and its groves and coppices of trees, the cattle browsing on its lower slopes, and the mountain sheep wandering where they list across its wide sweep, all tend to attract the traveller, while the isolated cottage perched on its very summit seems to exercise a certain temptation on the climber. When the Chevin is once climbed and the cottage gained—always at a cost of leg-wearying and lung-straining work if a straight-ahead track be taken—the pains of climbing it are forgotten in the pleasure of sitting down on the rocks at the top, and gazing over the magnificent panorama of hill and valley, moorland and meadow, which is unfolded on every side. To the north and west lie the hills and moors which extend from the Wharfe into the Craven district; eastward the eye penetrates far across the vale of York; to the south lies the valley of the Aire and the smoky canopies which hang like clouds over the cities of Leeds and Bradford. But wide and far-reaching as this view is, the most charming thing to be seen from the top of the Chevin is the prospect of Otley itself, lying far below at its feet, with its church and houses dwarfed to the size of a toy village, and with the Wharfe running like a silver wire under a diminutive bridge.

From the highest ridge of the Chevin there is a by-path across the shelving land beyond in the direction of Guiseley, an old-fashioned place once sacred to the hand-loom weavers, but now modernised and full of great mills and weaving-sheds. Here there is an ancient church which is well worth careful examination, as representing almost every species of Gothic architecture. It has a beautiful Norman porch, the cylindrical columns of which are surmounted by elaborately enriched capitals. The south aisle is divided from the nave by circular arches rising from columns, and the capitals of the latter betray some approach to foliation. The windows are of three styles—Early English, Decorated, and Perpendicular, and in the churchyard there is a fragment of a Saxon cross. Almost opposite Guiseley, across the valley which connects Airedale with Wharfedale, stands Hawksworth, full of memorials of the old family whose name it bears, and of the Fawkeses of Farnley, and below it, and nearer the Wharfe, lies Menston, a place which has many historical associations, but is now chiefly famous as being the site of one of the most extensive lunatic asylums in the country. It was at Menston Hall that Cromwell, the Fairfaxes, and several of the leading Parliamentarians held a council of war previous to the fight at Marston Moor, and it was at the stone table, now at Farnley, round which the council was held, that Cromwell dined after that decisive struggle was over. Between Menston and

the Wharfe, at the western edge of the last spur of the Chevin, and in an angle made by the railway curve between Menston and Otley there is a small, pleasantly situated cemetery in which the traveller will find the grave of William Edward Forster, one of the most eminent and honourable



WESTON HALL

of modern statesmen, who was interred here in 1885, at a spot commanding a prospect of many things familiar to him in life.

Across the valley of the Wharfe from this point, and lying a little way back from the north bank of the river, is the park and hall of Weston, another of the delightful historic mansions which abound in this part of Wharfedale. Weston Park, like that of Farnley, is beautifully situated, and clothed with luxuriant vegetation, and its groves of trees and leafy coppices are peculiarly inviting to the lover of nature. The hall is perhaps the most ideally-situated house in the neighbourhood, and presents a wonderfully attractive picture viewed from the rising ground in the park. It stands out against a splendid background of woods, and is fronted by a lake surrounded by ornamental gardens, in the midst of which stands an ancient banqueting-hall, the shields in which display the arms of the families of Stanley and of Vavasour. The architecture of the hall, for long generations the home of the Vavasours, whose last representative died early in the present century,

is of the Elizabethan period, and is in very effective harmony with its immediate surroundings. The north wing is semicircular in shape, and its countless windows are embowered in ivy, which covers this part of the house from roof to foundation, and adds greatly to its old-world appearance. Close to the house is the ancient church of Weston, an edifice which dates back to the twelfth century. This interesting building is surrounded by trees, some of which are almost as aged and time-worn as itself. It has no tower, and consists of nave, north aisle, and chancel. At its west end is a buttress, and another projects by the quaint porch on the south side. Within there are some ancient monuments, the most interesting of which is a tomb containing the remains of Sir William Stopham, Knt., Lord of Weston, who died about the beginning of the fourteenth century, and whose daughter and heiress brought the estates into the hands of the Vavasours by her marriage with a younger brother of Sir Mauger le Vavasour of Hazlewood.



SUNDIAL AT WESTON



## CHAPTER XXXI

### The Valley of the Washburn

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE WASHBURN—ITS JUNCTION WITH THE WHARFE AT POOL—LEATHLEY VILLAGE AND CHURCH—A WHARFEDALE CENTENARIAN—LINDLEY WOOD RESERVOIR—SWINSTY HALL—HAVERAH PARK—FOREST MOOR—FEWSTON—FEWSTON AND SWINSTY RESERVOIRS—TIMBLE—CRAGG HALL—THE ORIGINAL HOME OF THE THACKERAYS—THE ROMAN RIG ON BEAMSLEY MOOR—BLUBBER-HOUSES—SOURCE OF THE WASHBURN.

#### I



ONE of the greatest charms of Wharfedale, to the traveller who is not bound down to hard and fast lines in the pursuit of his journey, lies in its possession of certain outlying nooks and corners into which it is particularly delightful to stray from the better-known beauties of the valley itself. Of all these extraneous additions to Wharfedale's loveliness, the little valley of the Washburn is undoubtedly the most charming, and in some respects it commands even more admiration than any separate portion of the greater dale can exact from the lover of natural beauty. Rising amidst the solitude of the moorlands which separate Wharfedale from Nidderdale, the Washburn passes through several miles of varied surroundings ere it runs into the Wharfe at Pool. The villages near its source are quaint and interesting, and far removed from the world, and the moors which shut them in are destitute of all life save that of the wild creatures inhabiting them. All along the banks of the stream there is continual food for observation in the shape of charming bits of scenery, old houses and mansions, and wide prospects of wood and water, which would do no discredit to the Lake District or to Switzerland. The lake scenery along the valley of the Washburn is, indeed, its chief glory. It is not entirely natural lake scenery, for the three lakes are in sober truth reservoirs from which Leeds folk draw a considerable portion



LINDLEY WOOD RESERVOIR

of their city's water-supply, but they occupy such romantic situations and have so few traces of artificiality about them, that it is difficult to believe that they are anything but natural lakes. The scenery which surrounds the most important of them, Lindley Wood Reservoir, is so beautiful and striking as to challenge comparison with the surroundings of the Cumberland lakes, and from one point of vantage, on the high ground between Farnley church and the foot of the reservoir, there is a prospect of water, wood, and hillside which no lover of the picturesque and romantic will ever forget. The valley of the Washburn, too, is distinguished by its possession of one of the prettiest, if not the very prettiest, villages in Yorkshire—Leathley—situate at the mouth of the vale, on the eastern edge of Farnley Park. Here, as all along the rest of the valley, there is a thorough sense of rural ease and peace such as one finds it difficult to discover elsewhere. There is nothing to distract or to annoy in this secluded corner of the world, nothing in the shape of manufacture exists, and signs of human life are few. A man might journey for miles along the windings of the stream or across the moors which top the high ground on either side of it without encountering a fellow-being, so sparsely is the district populated, and so much out of the beaten track are its highways and byways; and in such villages and hamlets as it possesses there is the true flavour of that Arcadian simplicity which is so great a delight and so marvellous a wonder to the dweller amidst crowded cities.

One of the best ways of seeing the most characteristic features of the valley of the Washburn is to follow its windings from its junction with the Wharfe near Pool through the village of Leathley to Lindley Wood Reservoir, and thence past the reservoirs of Swinsty and Fewston to Fewston village, from whence excursions may be made east or west ere proceeding along the valley to the pretty roadside hamlet which bears the curious name of Blubberhouses. From Blubberhouses the Washburn may be followed towards the moors lying between Wharfedale and Niddedale, and the journey subsequently continued by turning westward from the same place towards Bolton Priory, by a highroad which passes over Beamsley Moor at an altitude of over a thousand feet. Such an excursion, stretching from one point of Wharfedale to another, is easy of accomplishment, and cannot fail to yield rich stores of pleasure and interest to the traveller, who will find in its course a wonderful variety of scenery and many matters of rare interest.

The scenery which surrounds the junction of the Wharfe and the Washburn is a fine foretaste of the beauties which the traveller will encounter along the valley through which the smaller stream runs on its way from the slopes of Greenhow Hill. Hereabouts the meadows on either side the Wharfe are wide and level, and slope gently on one side towards the mighty bulk of Otley Chevin, and on the other to the wooded banks of Leathley and Farnley. Through them, closely adjacent to the leafy lanes between the two valleys, runs the Washburn, a narrow, shallow, brown-hued stream, clear as crystal, always murmuring and rippling over the moss-covered stones of its bed, and always sure of affording good sport to the follower of the gentle art. Nothing could be more charming or peaceful than the entrance to Leathley village at the point where road and river meet and run alongside each other beneath the ancient trees. Quiet and pastoral as Wharfedale is, its ease and peace are as nothing to those which are found as soon as the Washburn valley is entered. Something in the first appearance of Leathley, in the sight of its ancient church on one side of the highroad and of the quaint schoolhouse on the other, of the great groves of elm and ash and chestnut, crowned with the nests of cawing rooks, which throw long shadows on the homesteads and cottages, and above all in the ripple of the winding stream, suggests a sense of quietude which is as grateful as it is unique. Many a traveller, intent on exploring the beauties of the Washburn valley, has reached Leathley and gone no further on his way, so charmingly rural and inviting are its surroundings, from the old Norman church at one end of the street, to the romantically situated watermill at the other. It is singularly unlike most English villages in the fact that its houses and cottages are in almost every case entirely isolated. With the exception of the two or three cottages near the schoolhouse, all the dwellings are detached, and occur at considerable distances along the road which con-

stitutes the village street. They are all embowered in trees and shrubs, and surrounded by gardens full of the flowers which rustic minds most love, and the townsman who glances over their enclosing hedgerows must needs envy their occupants a life lived amidst such pleasant environments.

The ancient church of Leathley, which stands on a gentle eminence overlooking the valley of the Wharfe and the windings of the first stretches of the Washburn, is a quaint and interesting edifice of great antiquity, dedicated to St. Oswald, and at one time an appurtenance of the Priory of Nostell. Its appearance is essentially primitive and original, for it was chiefly built of stones gathered from the bed of the Washburn, and it has accordingly a home-made aspect, which is in singular keeping with the rural air of the village. The interior of the church contains a good deal of Norman work of an early period, which, however, has suffered at the hands of some would-be restorer. In the wall of the tower



LEATHLEY  
CHURCH

there is a very fine door of old oak covered with beautiful wrought iron work, and in the chancel is a piscina of the twelfth century, curiously ornamented and crocketed. There is a fragment of an ancient cross in the churchyard, and there are several gravestones and mural monuments within the church which bespeak great antiquity. A number of stone coffins have been found here at various times, and there can be no doubt that a settlement has existed hereabouts for a very long period. Outside the churchyard are the ancient stocks of the village, still in good preservation, and practically fit for their original purpose. At the ancient hall near the entrance to the village lived the mediæval family of De Lelay. Leathley in the seventeenth century was in possession of the Hitch family, one of whom, Robert Hitch, was Dean of York in 1676. It subsequently passed into the hands of the Fawkeses of Farnley, in whose possession it still remains.

There died at Leathley in the autumn of 1898 a remarkable old person

named Elizabeth Watson, who for three years previous to her death had been celebrated throughout the district, and even beyond its borders, by the title of the Wharfedale Centenarian. She was not a native of Leathley, but of the south-west Riding, where she was born, near Great Houghton, in September 1795. She received little education in her youth, and went out to domestic service at a very early age. After various periods of service in the neighbourhood of Doncaster and Wakefield, she married Henry Watson, a hind in the employ of the Earl of Mexborough, and bore him a family of thirteen. After her husband's death she took up her residence at Leathley, and by the influence of its rector was accommodated

with one of the almshouses which she resided in with a daughter until her death. At the age of 100 she was still in possession of her faculties, would rise early in the morning to gather a basket of mushrooms, and walk to Otley to dispose of them, and return home none the worse for her toil



THE STOCKS AT LEATHLEY

and journey, and at the same age she boasted that her eyesight was still so good that she could see to thread a needle, and her strength so unimpaired that she could make a hundred pounds of butter with any woman in Wharfedale. She herself attributed her longevity to the fact that she had been a very hard-working woman all her life, but it is significant that other members of her family lived to great ages—her paternal uncle to 115, and her father to 110 years of age. On the completion of her centenary Mrs. Watson was visited by hundreds of people from all parts of the country, and at that time she gave every promise of exceeding the age of the longest-lived of her forbears. She was interred in Leathley churchyard in the presence of a considerable gathering.

From the water-mill at Leathley, an old-fashioned place by which it is a delight to linger, there is a footpath, running alongside the Washburn for some distance, and then turning into the road, by which the traveller will find a most picturesque approach to Lindley Wood Reservoir. Here, despite the fact that the great sheet of water which lies before him is of artificial instead of natural formation, he will be struck by the fine prospect which meets his view from the corner of the vast embankment that stretches

the almshouse, in which she resided with a daughter until her death. At the age of 100 she was still in possession of her faculties, would rise early in the morning to gather a basket of mushrooms, and walk to Otley to dispose of them, and return home none the worse for her toil

across the valley. The reservoir, one of the three of Lindley, Swinsty, and Fewston, constructed by the corporation of Leeds for the supply of water to that city, lies under the shadow of a great wood on the west side and the slope of a green hill on the east, and disappears beneath a bridge at its further extremity, far away in the distance. Apart from the embankment and the works adjacent thereto, there is nothing to distinguish the reservoir from a natural lake, and in spring and summer its situation is of undoubted beauty and charm. A little above the deep wood which comes down to the edge of the water is the hamlet of Lindley Green, near which are the small remains of the ancient home of the Palmes, one of the oldest families of the neighbourhood, now entirely extinct. In Otley church there is an ancient brass plate whereon is engraved the pedigrees of the Palmes and Lindleys for sixteen generations—from the twelfth to the sixteenth centuries—beneath which appears the effigy of the last male of his race, Francis Palmes, in the attitude of prayer.

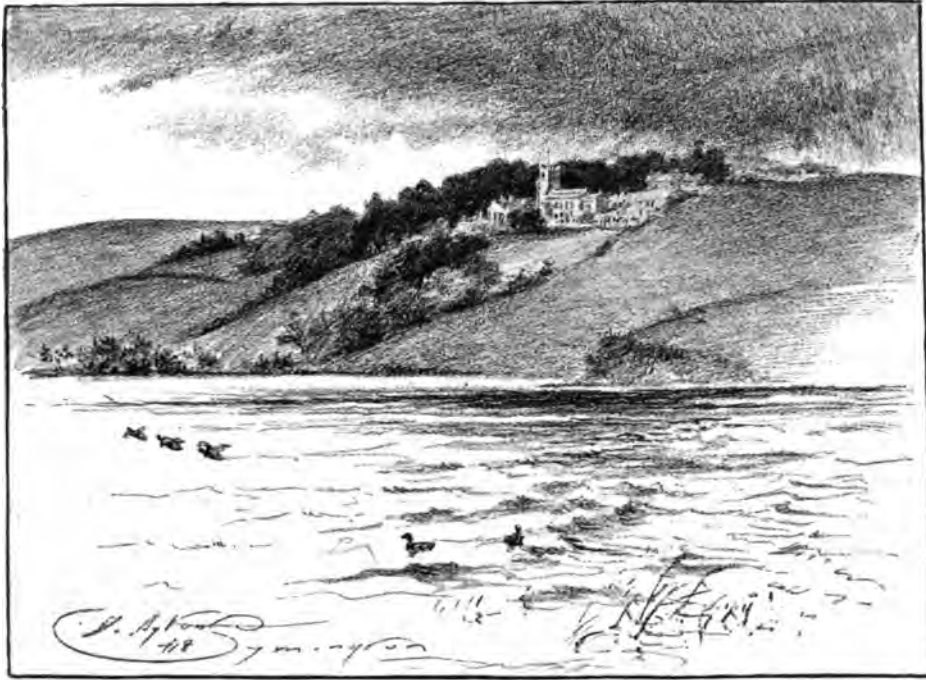
From Lindley Bridge at the north end of the lake-reservoir the traveller will enjoy some striking views of the country which he has already traversed, and some equally charming glimpses of the Washburn as it winds along the valley towards Swinsty. Enclosed at this point by thickly-wooded hills coming sharply down to the water's edge, the Washburn is here particularly entrancing and inviting, and is much more pleasant to follow as a guide than the highroad which goes over the hills and threads the moorlands above. In the region called Dob Park the surroundings of the Washburn are particularly attractive to lovers of natural beauty of a quiet and pastoral nature. An old pack-horse bridge which crosses the stream at this point is one of the most prominent features in a picturesque glimpse of the river's course—it is a primitive, narrow erection of one wide arch, beneath which the water swirls and leaps above the brown pools wherein the trout linger. The vegetation of the meadow-lands hereabouts is singularly luxurious, and the lonely farmsteads, often miles from the nearest house, seem the veriest abodes of silence—so quiet and peaceful that one is almost astonished to find them tenanted.

## II

At the southern extremity of Swinsty reservoir, another vast sheet of water which is in nowise different to a natural lake, the traveller will find an ancient mansion of commanding appearance which stands, venerable, grey, and suggestive of old-world romance, on the west side of the Washburn. This is Swinsty Hall; according to Grainge, the best, most substantial, and most majestic of the old mansion-houses along this valley, and a place of great mystery also. There is a curious legend as to the origin of this picturesque old house which is not the less interesting because it is somewhat gruesome. It is said that during the great plague of London a

native of this district repaired to the metropolis, and employed himself in systematic fashion as a pillager. He robbed the dead of whatever valuables they had upon their persons, and ransacked deserted houses for money and jewels. Amassing considerable wealth by the pursuit of these nefarious practices, he ultimately returned to his native valley, and hid his ill-gotten treasure in a cottage near the Washburn at Swinsty. Some report of his doings had reached the ears of the folk thereabouts, and the man was for a time shunned. Ere long, however, he purchased the land immediately surrounding his cottage, and set to work to build the present Swinsty Hall. It is said that the material used in its construction was brought to the site by pack-horses, but the whole story is of a strange complexion, and seems to be much discounted so far as absolute truth is concerned by the fact that some of the windows of the house bear date 1627, forty years before the plague. The truth or untruth of the tradition, fortunately, has nothing to do with the aspect of Swinsty Hall, whose clustered chimneys, ancient gables and windows, and general air of antiquity, contrive to make it a notable object. It possesses a very good specimen of a sixteenth century room, panelled in oak, and ornamented with an elaborately carved frieze, and, whatever its real origin may be, is without doubt one of the most notable old houses of the neighbourhood.

Further legendary matter meets the traveller on the east side of the valley of the Washburn in the midst of the lonely land known as Forest Moor, or the Forest of Knaresborough, a vast tract of country lying between Harrogate and the watershed of the Wharfe. Until rather more than a century ago this district was unenclosed, and at that time it covered an area of over 100,000 acres, of which about one-third was common to the inhabitants for pasturage and wood. In the old days this space was densely wooded, and Thoresby mentions having heard of an old writing which obliged the town folk of Knaresborough to cut down as many trees yearly as would keep open a good road for the wool-carriers going between Newcastle and Leeds, and adds that in his time there was scarcely a tree to be seen. It is now a bleak, wild, treeless country, with a few houses here and there, and must in winter be singularly lonely and cut off from the world. Here in mediæval days the kings had much hunting of bear, wolf, and red deer, and the district was in especial favour with Edward III. and with John of Gaunt. It was during his lordship of the forest that John of Gaunt is said to have conferred a considerable slice out of it upon one Haverah, a cripple, under the following circumstances:—One day John of Gaunt being in the hunting-lodge wherein the royal visitors abode when they were staying in these parts, there came into his presence a certain man named Haverah, who went on crutches, being very lame, and asked for a piece of land wherefrom he might eke out a living. John of Gaunt granted his request, humorously stipulating that he should only have as much land as he could hop round within a day's compass.



FEWSTON FROM SWINSTY RESERVOIR

Haverah, choosing the longest day of the year for his attempt to make himself master of a certain portion of real estate, began his labours at sunrise, and went on hopping all day, until, as the sun set, he completed a circle, and entered into possession of the considerable area which still bears his name. The name of John of Gaunt is still associated with this district in the remains of the lodge or castle, called John o' Gaunt's Castle, in Haverah Park, not far away from which there are some traces of an ancient British fortification, lying between Haverah Park Top and the village of Fewston, at the head of the lower valley of the Washburn.

Fewston, though not so picturesque as Leathley, is perhaps the most remarkable village in the Washburn valley in the fact that it occupies a very fine position overlooking the lake reservoir of Swinsty, and has certain historical and literary associations which Leathley does not possess. On entering it the traveller is astonished to perceive signs of a tendency on its part to slip away into the lake lying at its feet. It is built, in the most picturesquely irregular fashion, on the side of a shelving hill, and since the construction of the reservoirs, its foundations appear to have given way, with the result that the stranger finds an exploration of the village productive of strange sights and curious surprises. Here he meets with some



ancient house, gabled and timbered, the walls of which are cracked and split from top to bottom ; there he comes across another which has so far moved from its original position as to challenge comparison with the Leaning Tower of Pisa ; further on he will find himself gazing on a third, which, after various crackings and bendings, has finally collapsed in a heap of ruins. This tendency to disintegration gives the village a curious aspect. It is not wanting, however, in other notable features. Its church, which has been rebuilt more than once, occupies a very fine position on the brow of the hill overlooking the lake, and though it contains few monuments or memorials of any great interest, it has one distinction in the fact that it is the burial-place of Edward Fairfax, the translator of Tasso's "Jerusalem Delivered," who lived at New Hall, close by. This member of the Fairfax family was born at the family seat of Denton, in Wharfedale, and appears to have spent a life of studious ease at Fewston. In his time the parish was reputed to be the haunt of witches, and that he himself was a believer in demonology and witchcraft seems to be proved by the fact that he wrote an account of various bewitchings at Fewston, two of the victims being his own daughters.

The view of the lake-reservoir, looking southward from Fewston, is very fine and imposing, that of Swinsty lying spread out like a miniature inland sea at the foot of the hill, and Lindley gleaming in patches through the woods and trees which almost hide it. On the west bank of Swinsty reservoir there is a quaint little village called Timble, which was raided by the Scots in 1318 when they came into these parts on one of their marauding expeditions. Further along in the same direction, but overlooking Fewston reservoir, which extends from the end of that village to Blubberhouses Bridge, there is another historic house of great antiquity in Cragg Hall, which was the scene of a somewhat remarkable incident during the Civil War. It was at that time tenanted by a staunch Parliamentarian, who saw so little reason to bridle his tongue that he formed the habit of speaking contemptuously of all who differed from him on the burning question of the day, and particularly of the Royalist garrisons stationed at the castles of Knaresborough and Skipton. Some of his contemptuous remarks coming to the ears of those in command at these places, it was privily determined to send a troop of horse over to the Washburn valley and punish the Parliamentarian after one or other of the pleasant fashions of those days. The tenant of Cragg Hall, however, heard some rumour of the threatened danger, and adopted measures for his own safety and that of his belongings. He hid his horses, which were of some value, in an alder-coppice near the river, and sent off his servants with the best of his household goods to certain safe places in the neighbourhood. These precautions taken, he fastened up his house, bolting, barring, and chaining, until he had transformed it into a veritable fortress, and then waited in peace for the approach of his enemies. When they appeared he



HIGHROAD OVER BLUBBERHOUSES MOOR

hid himself in a secure hiding-place near the roof. After the Royalists had spent some time in trying to break down the massive door, they contrived to effect an entrance elsewhere, but they failed to find their man, who, after they had departed discomfited, came forth from his retreat, reassembled his servants and goods, and settled down to his old life. The curious point of the story is, that while the Royalists were in the house, the man in hiding actually had a fit of coughing which he could not repress, but though they were so near him they did not detect the sound, and he escaped scot-free—no doubt quite ready to resume his former occupation of making caustic remarks upon the politics of his Royalist neighbours.

Not far away from Fewston on the way to Blubberhouses there is a small hamlet named Thackray, from whence sprang the ancestors of William Makepeace Thackeray, the famous novelist. The house which the Thackeray family occupied until quite recent times is now no longer in existence, but their names are of frequent occurrence in the local register of Hampsthwaite, of which parish Thackray forms a part. There were Thackerays here in the fourteenth century, and it is on record that they contributed to the levies imposed by Richard II. for the carrying on of the wars with France. Walter Thackeray and Margaret his wife were



BLUBBERHOUSES MOOR

living in the parish during the reign of Queen Elizabeth, and one Timothy Thackeray was parish clerk of Hampsthwaite about the end of the seventeenth century. His son, Thomas, born about 1693, received a good education, took holy orders, and having adopted teaching as a profession, was made Head Master of Harrow in 1746, and D.D. in 1747. He was afterwards appointed Archdeacon of Surrey, and died in 1760. His youngest son was William Makepeace Thackeray of the Indian Civil Service, grandfather of the author of the same name. Some years before his death Thackeray visited the home of his ancestors in company with his daughters.

At Blubberhouses the Washburn valley becomes somewhat narrower than in its previous course, and the scenery on either side of it is wilder and more suggestive of solitude and romance. Blubberhouses itself is a place of much charm, ugly as its name looks in print. It lies in a declivity at a point where the Washburn is crossed by the highway leading from Skipton to Harrogate, and some idea of the character of its surroundings may be gathered from the fact that the village itself is situated at an altitude of over 500 feet above sea-level, and that the highway rises just outside it, going westward, to over 1000 feet, and a short distance away, going eastward, to nearly 800 feet. The name Blubberhouses is said to be derived from the Norse *Blaaber Hus* = the house of the bilberry, and there is no doubt that it is a place of great antiquity. Like Leathley and Fewston it has rural and romantic charms which prompt the traveller to stay in its midst for a time, but its real delights are not in the heart of the little village

itself, but in the solitudes of the great moors which lie between its confines and the line of the Wharfe running from Ilkley to Barden Bridge. A magnificent prospect of these moors and of much of the high ground surrounding the stretches of Upper Wharfedale may be obtained from the highest point of the highway between Blubberhouses and Bolton Bridge—which track of semi-solitude and sublime views the traveller who desires to regain the Wharfe at Bolton will follow. From here at an altitude of over 1000 feet the eye may sweep a tract of country of vast extent, wherein moorland and mountain, river and rock, combine to form a landscape of surpassing beauty.

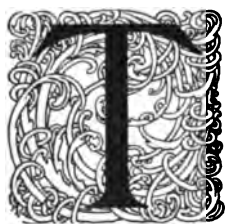
Between this highroad—alongside which for some distance runs the old road now no longer used for serious traffic, but worth following for its associations—and the tributary of the Washburn known as Gill Beck, there is a still traceable piece of the Roman road which crossed the great moorlands lying between the valleys of the Nidd and the Wharfe, and gave direct communication between the camps of Aldborough (Isurium), and Ilkley (Olicana). This highway, which from the fact that it is not marked in the itinerary of Antonine, is supposed to have been constructed during the latter period of the Roman occupation, crossed the Nidd at Hampsthwaite, a few miles away, and the Washburn just below Blubberhouses, and climbing the hill at that point made straight for Ilkley over the south shoulder of Beamsley Moor. A pleasant excursion may be made over the moors from Blubberhouses to Ilkley by following the road for some little distance, and then turning off by the tracks in the heather which lead towards Denton and Middleton, and the pleasure of it becomes all the more heightened by the consciousness that it is almost impossible to find the proper way. Another excursion, wild, solitary, and productive of magnificent views, may be made along the moors to the summit of Beamsley Beacon, which rises to a height of about 1400 feet, and commands an unrivalled prospect of the valley of the Wharfe. To those who are not so fond of vast solitudes and great silences, however, the last stretches of the Washburn, between Blubberhouses and Greenhow Hill, will probably yield more attraction than the heath-clad moorlands, where little but the cry of the grouse is heard, and where the face of man is rarely set eyes on. But the last windings of the little river are also through a lonely land—in the whole of the county there is no river or stream which goes so deeply into the heart of the hills and moors as this, or conducts its followers through such quiet scenes to the murmur of its own music.

## CHAPTER XXXII

### The Wharfe from Burley to Beamsley

BURLEY—THE BURLEY GREAT PUDDING—THE HERMIT OF ROMBALD'S MOOR—ASKWITH—DENTON: THE ANCESTRAL HOME OF THE FAIRFAXES—ILKLEY: THE OLICANA OF THE ROMANS—MODERN ILKLEY—ILKLEY PARISH CHURCH AND ITS CHURCHYARD CROSSES—ANTIQUITIES IN ILKLEY—THE CUP AND RING STONES—THE COW AND CALF ROCKS—VIEW FROM PANORAMA ROCKS—THE STORY OF ROBERT COLLYER—MIDDLETON—NESFIELD: A ROMAN FORTIFICATION—ADDINGHAM—ROMAN CAMP ON ADDINGHAM MOOR—BEAMSLEY AND KEX BECK—VIEW FROM BEAMSLEY BEACON.

#### I



THE highroad from Otley and Ilkley runs for the greater part of its course between the Wharfe and the railway line, and affords some striking views of the river scenery and of the hills and moors which close in the valley on both sides. Few highways have such charming surroundings as this, and few roadside villages are so bright and attractive as the only one through which it passes on its six miles' stretch between the two principal towns of this part of Wharfedale. Burley, which lies almost exactly half-way between Otley and Ilkley, is a striking example of the fact that it is never wise to prophesy, even in general terms. Whitaker, whose antipathies to manufacture and industries were only equalled by his love of natural beauty, considered Burley a delightful village, but contaminated, physically and morally, by the presence of a cotton mill, and hinted that the spread of industrialism in its midst would lead to its total degeneracy. Since his day and generation, Burley has increased considerably in size, and is the site of a very famous mill, but it is probably very much superior in physical and moral virtues to what it was a century ago or at any period of its existence. Although a place of considerable antiquity, and still possessing some ancient cottages strangely at variance with its newer buildings, Burley is to all intents and purposes a creation of the nineteenth century, and is essentially a manu-

facturing village. Of that fact, however, the traveller is never inconveniently reminded. There are no dirty mills, no dirty people, and no dirty streets to be seen here, and though it is not held up to admiration as a model village, it is without doubt the cleanest and brightest industrial village in the county. With Greenholme Mills, the principal manufacturing concern in Burley, the late William Edward Forster, the author of the Education Acts of 1870, and the representative of Bradford in Parliament for many years, was closely connected, first as an active, and subsequently—during the late stages of his political career, in which he was a responsible member of various governments—as a sleeping partner. His old home, Wharfeside, is near the mills, and his grave is in the little burial-ground near Menston. Much of the brightness and attractiveness of Burley is due to the generosity of the firm with which Mr. Forster was associated, whose members have at various times provided schools, reading-rooms, concert-halls, and similar institutions for the benefit of their workpeople. The general aspect of the place is largely new. The church, which stands on the site of an ancient chapel-of-ease that in its turn had replaced another of very early date, was rebuilt about thirty years ago, and its only object of interest is some old oak which was formerly part of the pew once occupied by Charles Fairfax of Menston, who was an attendant at the services here about the time of the Civil War. Until nearly the end of the last century there used to be a famous septennial gathering at Burley, known as the Feast of the Great Pudding, which was attended by numbers of people from the adjacent parishes. About thirty stones of flour and the like weight of fruit was used in manufacturing a huge plum-pudding, which when duly boiled was distri-



Burley  
— Wharfedale.

buted from a platform erected under the great Elm, or Alm, tree near the Malt Shovel Inn. It is said that though the pudding was boiled for nights and days it was never possible to cook it thoroughly, and that its recipients were usually plentifully bedaubed with paste as it was handed to them by the carvers.

In the churchyard of Burley there lies one of the most notable of the eccentric characters for which Yorkshire is famous, in the person of Job Senior, known to fame as the Hermit of Rombald's Moor. From an account of his strange career, published by Harrison, a bookseller of Bingley, after his death, it appears that Senior was born near Ilkley, and was the illegitimate son of a man who left him a small fortune. In his youth he was strong and good-looking and somewhat smart in his dress. He was employed as a labourer in the Ilkley district, and was noted for his great strength in lifting the heavy stones of which the fences in Wharfedale are principally built. He was afterwards employed as a wool-comber, and then as an hostler at Ilkley, and later in life he gave way to habits of dissipation and intemperance, and was principally supported by the charity of neighbours. When he was about sixty years of age he made the acquaintance of an ancient widow named Mary Barret, who resided in a cottage on the edge of Rombald's Moor. Behind the cottage was a garden and paddock which had been redeemed by Mary Barret's first husband from the common land, and it occurred to Senior that if he could only persuade the old woman—who was then in her eightieth year—to marry him, the house and land would become his own property. He accordingly waited upon Mary, and suggested that as they were both lone folk they would do well to wed. To this the old woman demurred, but on Senior assuring her that he was in love with her bonny looks, she consented, and they were duly married. Soon after the wedding his wife fell ill, and the exact manner of her death was as follows:—She complained one night that she was cold, and Senior accordingly took up the hearthstone, dug a pit in the earth, and laid her in it, in close proximity to the fire. Later on she felt hungry, so he purchased a pound of fat bacon, placed it on the fire, and catching the almost blazing fat which ran from it in an iron spoon, poured the contents of the latter down the old woman's throat, with the result that she died almost instantly. Senior was very disconsolate at her death, but was somewhat consoled by the thought that he would now enter into entire possession of the house and land. In this, however, he was disappointed, as his wife's children by her first marriage appeared on the scene and successfully laid claim to the property. Senior for a time kept possession of the cottage, but happening to leave it one day he found on his return at night that it had been dismantled, and that a hoard of money which he had concealed in the walls had been lost or stolen. This loss affected his reason, and from that time he lived in a rude hut which he constructed out of the ruins of the cottage. This was about the size of a dog-kennel, and could only be entered in a

creeping position. All around his hut Senior planted potatoes, and lived on them, with the addition of oatmeal and buttermilk. He kept a peat-fire burning close by, and used to sit with one leg on each side of it, poking roasted potatoes from its depths with his stick, and rolling them in his oatmeal bag ere he ate them. He drank his water and buttermilk warm, heating them in stone bottles, which were kept amongst the embers. He had a curious trick of singing in four voices—treble, alto, tenor, and bass—and in winter used to travel about the country exhibiting his skill, and sleeping in any outhouse offered him. His personal habits were of an extreme filthiness: he never washed himself or used a comb, and his clothes were unchanged for years. He wore clogs stuffed with hay on his feet, and his legs were encased in straw. His coat was a thing of many colours and mere patches, and his breeches were of a like nature, supported by a girth of hemp tied tightly about his body. On his back he carried a bag, and on his head was a brimless hat, the ruins of which were kept together by hemp-string. From it dangled a tobacco-pipe, and in each hand, as he walked, he carried a rough staff. Senior was very fond of giving practical advice to people who visited him out of curiosity, and his favourite maxim was to the effect that land was better than a wife, and potatoes than children.

On the north bank of the Wharfe, almost opposite Burley, lies the village of Askwith, a quaint, old-world place, wherein several inhabitants are living on the very spots, if not in the same houses, occupied by their ancestors six centuries ago. Askwith is one of the prettiest and quietest of the Wharfeside villages, and the charm of its gardens and orchards is deepened by the presence of the two brooks which run through it from the moors beyond to join the Wharfe near Burley. A short distance to its west lies Denton Park, the ancestral home of the famous family of Fairfax. Originally the property of the Thwaites family, whose ancestors were Clerks of the Kitchen to William the Conqueror, it passed into the possession of the Fairfaxes in 1518 by the romantic marriage of Sir William Fairfax to Isabel Thwaites, the heiress whom he forcibly removed from the keeping of the sisters at Nun Appleton, and espoused at the adjacent church of Bolton Percy. Denton is most closely connected with the life and doings of Thomas, the first Lord Fairfax, who spent the greater part of his time here, died here, and was buried in the church of Otley, a few miles away. In his youth he had many employments as a diplomatist. Elizabeth despatched him to the court of Scotland on five occasions as the bearer of important communications for James I., who formed a great admiration for the young envoy's qualities. He was knighted on the field after the battle of Rouen by the Earl of Essex on account of his great bravery, and was subsequently raised to the peerage. It is a curious thing that he formed an impression that his eldest son, the famous Sir Ferdinando, possessed no military talent, and there are two legends in connection with the old man which show that he had some strange notions of the powers of his own



family. On one occasion he bade his grandson Thomas to mind the art of war, for his father Ferdinando, though a good man, was yet but a mere coward. On another occasion he went to visit Matthew, Archbishop of York, and found that prelate moody and disconsolate. On inquiring the reason, Matthew replied that he was troubled about his sons—one had wit and no grace, another had grace and no wit, a third had neither wit nor grace. To this Fairfax made answer that although his friend's case was sad, it was by no means singular, for he himself was much disappointed in his family, one of whom he sent to the Netherlands to study the art of war, with the result that he had turned out a good magistrate but a poor soldier; another to Cambridge, where he had made himself a sound lawyer, but an indifferent divine; and a third to the Inns of Court, where he had neglected law and made a fine acquaintance with divinity. It is needless to say that Lord Fairfax's opinions with respect to his son Ferdinando were entirely erroneous, or that he had no need to bemoan the lack of parts in his family, which within a few generations after his death gave to the world judges, generals, and students whose doings added further lustre to their name.

The manor and hall of Denton was in possession of the Fairfax family until the beginning of the eighteenth century, when it passed from the hands of the sixth lord—improperly influenced, it is said, by his mother—into those of the Ibbitsons, from whom it descended by marriage to its present owners, the Wyvills. The ancient hall was destroyed by fire in 1734, and the modern house was built by Sir James Ibbitson from the designs of Carr, of York, one of the architects responsible for Harewood House. It stands on the summit of rising ground which slopes gently from the river, and its south front, which has an entrance between four Ionic columns supporting a pediment, looks very imposing and stately from the opposite bank of the Wharfe. Its luxuriantly wooded park, stretching along the sides of the hill which rises from the edge of the river to the confines of the moorlands above, is a delightful place in which to wander, and affords some very extensive and striking views of the scenery on the south of the Wharfe, and notably of the long, dark, frowning ridge of Rombald's Moor overtopping Ben Rhydding and Ilkley.

## II

There are few places in Yorkshire which combine within their own limits so much of natural charm and so many historical associations as are brought together in Ilkley, the *Olicana* of Roman days. The traveller who visits the town, or village—for though it is now a place of considerable size, it is still a village to its own people—for the first time, is surprised to hear that he is standing on a site of great antiquity, so very modern is the first appearance of the place. Everything that he sees at the first glance is new.

The railway station, the hotels, the hydropathic establishments, the villa residences of the Leeds and Bradford merchants who prefer the pure air of Wharfedale to the less invigorating breezes of Airedale, the shops and offices in the centre of the village, all have the stamp of modernity upon them. It is a very pleasing sort of modernity—clean, bright, attractive, and it needs no second glance to see that Ilkley is a place of ease and of pleasure rather than of toil and business cares. The evidences of its antiquity are not so readily apparent: it is only when the traveller begins to look about him that he sees certain objects and things which suddenly suggest to him that this is surely a place with a past. An ancient church—Runic crosses—a thatched cottage or two—a chance glimpse of an old house—these are the only things which tell of Ilkley's antiquity. And yet half a century ago the place was antiquated enough. Where the principal street now stands ran an open brook, crossed at one point by a primitive bridge formed by two slabs of stone; where there are now churches, hotels, and restaurants, there were a few cottages thatched with straw, a mill, a barn, a sawpit, and a grove of trees. In those days Ilkley was a mere village in reality, as in name; now-a-days it is to all intents and purposes a flourishing town, and is famous all the world over for its health-giving properties.

That Ilkley is identical with the *Olicana* of the Roman occupation, has long been proved to the satisfaction of the most exacting inquirers into these matters. The site of the Roman camp is still to be seen by the curious at Castle Hill and Castle Yard, between the lower part of the village and the river. When Whitaker examined it he found the outline on these sides to be very entire, and estimated its measurement at 160 by 100 yards. He considered the camp or fortress to have been bounded on the north by the Wharfe, on the east and west by brooks, and on the south by an enclosure running along the site of the present street leading from the church downwards. He speaks of the foundations of indissoluble mortar as being very conspicuous, and of seeing remains of Roman brick, glass, and earthenware at the edge of the brow. The outposts of this camp were at Counterhills and Woofa Bank, close by Addingham, and at Castleburg, near Nesfield. Of the Roman remains unearthed on or about the site of the *castra*, the most important is undoubtedly a stone which was dug up in Camden's time, from which he copied the following inscription:—

IM · SEVERVS ·  
AVG · ET ANTONINVS  
CAES DESTINATVS  
RESTITVERVNT CVRAN-  
TE VIRIO LVPO LEG E-  
ORVM · PR · PR ·

This establishes the fact that the place was *rebuilt* during the reign of Severus (193–211) by Virius Luptus, legate and proprætor. The inscrip-

tion on this stone, preserved at Middleton Lodge, is now illegible, as is also that on a Roman votive altar which was taken out of the bed of the Wharfe. Fortunately Camden saw this during his visitation of the district, and copied it as follows :—

VERBEIÆ  
SACRVM  
CLODIVS  
FRONTO  
PRÆF. COH.  
II. LINGON.

It would appear from this that the second cohort of the Lingones was stationed at *Olicana*, and that one of them raised the votive altar on which Camden saw this inscription, in honour of the goddess Verbeia ; but Mr. Horsfall Turner, a well-informed writer on matters connected with Ilkley, suggests that *Verbeia* stands for *Guerif*, the cure wrought by the waters, the medicinal value of which is here first hinted at. Another inscription, copied by Camden from a stone built into the south-east corner of the church, seems to date back to the middle of the second century :—

. . . . .  
RVM CAES  
AVC . . .  
ANTONINI  
ET VERI  
IGVI DILEGTI  
CÆCILIVS  
PRÆF. COH.

Whitaker, from the nature of the site of the Roman camp at this place, argues that the original British name of Ilkley was Al-i-can, the fortress on the height, which was modified by the subsequent Saxon proprietors to Ylecanley, and so to Ilkley. He affirms that several Roman roads centred in the village. One led from Olicana to Isurium (Aldborough) by way of Beamsley Moor and the Forest of Knaresborough ; another led in the same direction, but somewhat south, to Calcaria (Tadcaster) ; a third, connected with the first, went westward to Mancunium (Manchester) by way of Addingham and Skipton. These roads were paved with large stones, which Whitaker speaks of seeing, and it is probable that a good deal of their original pavement still exists, hidden beneath the heather and ling of the moors. Of Roman remains in Ilkley, Whitaker also speaks of seeing fragments of very red brick, foundations of houses, the stone in the south-east corner of the church from which Camden copied the half-illegible inscription just quoted, and two stones in the belfry, one a Roman altar, with a patera embossed on its edge, and the other presenting the

figure of a woman wearing a curious head-dress and grasping a snake in either hand. This last figure is asserted by other authorities to represent Hercules strangling the serpents. There is a plaster cast of this stone to be seen in the church, but the original is now hidden by the raised floor. At the time of the Domesday Survey, Ilkley belonged to William de Percy, in possession of whose family it remained for some time. They had here a park and a mansion, and it was probably due to their piety that the present parish church was built out of the remains of the Roman fortress about the end of the eleventh century. There appears to have been some trade in the place during the two or three centuries following the Norman Conquest, for in the reign of Henry III. one of the Percys procured a royal charter for the holding of a weekly market and a yearly fair at Ilkley. The market was to be held on Wednesdays, and the fair on the vigil, day, and morrow of St. Luke the Evangelist, and five following days—eight days in all. Whether this charter was ever fully acted upon is not known.

From the Percys the manor passed into the hands of the de Kymes, and from them to the possession of the Middletons, who have held it since the days of Edward III. Of the history of the place during mediæval times and until the last century there are few records, and they are chiefly relating to the Middleton family or to the parish church, a complete list of the vicars of which is extant from 1242 downwards. A hundred years ago Ilkley appears to have been a mere collection of small cottages and houses centring round its ancient church. Its weekly market had then been abandoned, and there is no men-



tion of its fair in a list of Yorkshire fairs published in 1812. Whitaker speaks of it as a village on the great post-road which ran from York to Kendal, but adds significantly, that it was almost barred up by trackless wastes, and that all other roads to it were impracticable. He further remarks that its insignificance was equalled by its dirt, and that it was only known to two classes—to the antiquarians because of its Roman remains, and to invalids because of its fine medicinal waters. Even in the middle of the present century it was still a place of such insignificance that its population only numbered eight hundred persons. As for its rise to its present flourishing condition, and the complete disappearance of that dirt and insignificance which Whitaker speaks of with something of contempt, both are due to the existence of the water, of which he tells us with approval. This water springs from the hillside overhanging the village, and is singularly cold, even in the height of summer. A bath-house was built near the spring as long ago as 1669, but it was not until the middle of the present century that Ilkley began to emerge from the chrysalis state in which it had lain for nigh on to two thousand years. Various other reasons than the spring of medicinal water seem to have existed along with it for the rapid rise of the village to a state of enterprise and prosperity. One was the penetration of Wharfedale by the railway companies, who probably saw that the business men of Leeds and Bradford would be glad to live in a delightful country within a few miles of their own towns; and then the movement in favour of hydropathy, which gained much favour some forty or fifty years ago. The hydropathic establishment of Ben Rhydding was built in 1844, and afterwards greatly enlarged; that of Wells House was opened in 1856; and smaller establishments were soon added. Hospitals and homes for persons desirous of taking the waters, but too poor to hire lodgings in the village, were built within the next few years, and the nucleus of a new centre of population was thus got together. Between 1851 and 1881 the present Ilkley was practically built—streets, houses, villas, churches, institutions, and hotels of palatial dimensions were erected; and the quaint village, with its brook, mill, and thatched cottages, became a mere memory. During the thirty years of its recreation the population of Ilkley increased from under one thousand to nearly five thousand, and it is now probably twice as considerable as it was twenty years ago.

Of the few remains of antiquity which still exist in Ilkley for the delight of those interested in such matters, the ancient parish church of All Saints is the most attractive. It occupies a site at the foot of the slight slope on which the greater part of the place is built, and is within the boundary of the old Roman encampment, and therefore somewhat elevated above the Wharfe flowing in its rear. Originally founded about 1085, the church has at various times been rebuilt and restored, and important alterations and renovations have taken place in connection with its fabric on two

occasions during the past thirty years. As it now stands, it consists of nave, north and south aisles, chancel, and south porch, with a tower at the west end. The tower is a part of the original church of the eleventh century, and is supposed to be built out of the remains of the Roman camp. The chancel has been wholly rebuilt, but the old chancel arch remains. There are clerestory windows along the south side, each of which has five lights. The south porch is modern, and covers a fine arched Norman doorway with semicircular mouldings. Within the church there are numerous objects of much interest. In a recess in the wall of the south aisle is the monument of Sir Adam de Middleton, whose body was interred in the church very early in the fourteenth century. It presents the effigy of a crusader in chain-mail, recumbent, with hands clasped as in prayer, head supported by angels, and feet resting on a lion couchant. This monument in design and material is closely akin to that of Sir Robert de Styveton, or Steeton, at Kildwick, and was probably executed by the same sculptor. There are here a number of brasses commemorative of members of the Heber family who died in the seventeenth century, and particularly of Reginald Heber of Hollings Hall. The famous hymnologist, Bishop Heber, was a descendant of this family, from whom one of the prettiest parts of Ilkley, Heber's Ghyll, takes its name. The east window contains some good stained glass, representing the Crucifixion, and there are several other windows which are filled with painted glass. In the chancel there is a piscina, and at the west end of the north aisle a quaint, old-fashioned pew, balustraded by an open-work oak-screen, on which is carved the date 1663. The roof of the nave is open, and the aisles have lean-to roofs. All the other work of the interior is modern, and most of it very handsome, especially the font, which is a fine piece of stone work.



ANCIENT CROSSES, ILKLEY CHURCHYARD

The most remarkable objects of antiquity in or about the parish church of Ilkley are, without doubt, the three ancient crosses which stand near the south porch in the churchyard, and are easily seen across the low wall which separates the latter from the street. Around these remarkable remains of a long dead age much controversy and disputation has raged at one time or another. According to some authorities the crosses, or pillars, or whatever they really are, are of Roman origin ; according to others, of Runic ;

and to others again, of Celtic; while still further claims of their Saxon or Scandinavian character have been put forward. Whitaker supposed that they had some reference to the Trinity; other antiquarians hold that their presence in Ilkley denotes that Paulinus preached and baptized there during his missionary labours in Yorkshire. Of the appearance of these remains, as they appear at the present time, the following circumstantial account is given by Mr. Wardell in a pamphlet dealing with some historical aspects of Ilkley: "In the graveyard, on the south side of the church, are the remains of three crosses, the ornamental heads of which are, however, wanting. The centre one is the most entire, and is about eight feet in height; the others have been seriously mutilated by having been at one time made use of as gate-posts. These venerable relics are sepulchral monuments of the Saxon period. They are elaborately carved with scroll-work, and with figures of men, birds, and animals. The centre one bears on the north side the symbols of the Evangelists, in oblong compartments, human figures in flowing robes, each with the head of the animal which is his symbol, surrounded by a glory, and holding the book of his Gospel. St. John, the uppermost, has the head of an eagle; St. Luke, the next, that of a bull; St. Mark, that of a lion; St. Matthew, a human figure. The south side contains the figure of our Lord, and there appears to have been an inscription above His head; then a device composed of two animals whose lower extremities are knotted together; and then two other monstrous figures. The remaining sides have scroll-work, with representations of fruit and leaves. The eastern one is about five feet in height, and very much defaced and worn—it bears two men facing each other; then two animals, with their lower extremities interlaced; then two others; and lastly, two birds. The remaining two sides—for the fourth is mutilated—are composed of scroll-work. The western one is about four feet in height, and much more worn and defaced than the others. It has on one side a scroll and the figure of an ecclesiastic, in robes, holding a book. The designs on the other sides are almost obliterated." The mutilation of these extraordinary relics of antiquity to which Mr. Wardell refers was principally occasioned by the utilitarianism of the Ilkley folk of some previous generation, who used them as gateposts for the churchyard, and were barbarian enough to make holes in them wherein to fasten the hinges of the gates. They were rescued from this unseemly office by a late vicar of Ilkley, the Rev. John Snowdon, who had them carefully removed and set up in their present position near the south porch.

One of the most interesting bits of Ilkley which the lover of old-world things can find in its present very modern aspect is the old well, or bath house, commonly known as White Wells, which stands high up on the hillside that separates the village from Rombald's Moor. This quaint old cottage is a familiar landmark in this part of Wharfedale—its whitewashed walls are seen by the traveller while he is still miles away from Ilkley, on

highway or railroad, or on the trackless moors across the valley. It is said to have been in existence at the end of the seventeenth century, about which time the virtues of the spring of water which it covers began to be locally famous. There is a tradition that those virtues were accidentally discovered by a shepherd who had a sore, which was cured by immersion in the water springing out of the hillside. A writer who published an account of Ilkley in 1822 relates that an ancient man of the village, then closely approaching his hundredth year, told him that White Wells was in its present condition when he was a boy, and this proves that it has not undergone any important alteration for nearly two centuries. When the Ilkley folk were doing great things in the way of rebuilding and beautifying their native place some twenty-five years ago, there was a proposal from some person, who had no sense of the fitness of things, to pull down the old building, presumably with the notion of building a new pump room and baths after the fashion of Harrogate. Fortunately, this proposal was received by those inhabitants of Ilkley who wished to retain at least some landmarks of the old place with indignant protest, and White Wells was left to make the hillside as picturesque as formerly. No traveller should leave Ilkley without tasting the water which pours out from this magnificent spring. It is of an intense coldness, and an absolutely crystal clearness, but what there is in it that makes it so valuable as a medicinal water is more than any one can say. One medical authority remarks, that though it has frequently been analysed, no medicinal quality has ever been found in it, and gives it as his opinion that the real reason of its efficacy arises from its unequalled purity and softness. There are two other springs in Ilkley, however, which possess distinct medicinal qualities. The water of the Canker Well, near that part of the village known as the Grove, is slightly chalybeate, and each gallon contains about half a grain of iron, the tonic and hæmatinic powers of which are increased by the alterative qualities of the magnesia and lime which is also present. This water is very cold, having only forty-eight or forty-nine degrees of temperature in an atmosphere of seventy degrees. At the spring in Heber's Ghyll, the water, according to Mr. Rimington, an analyst of great experience, is unequalled amongst the English and continental chalybeate springs, for the smallness of the amount of its saline constituents. It, too, is of a remarkable coldness, and very bright, and though it has a distinct ferruginous quality, it is very pleasant to the taste.

The hillside leading from Ilkley to the northern edge of Rombald's Moor, and the vast expanse of the moor itself, are full of most interesting antiquities and remains, over the history and meaning of which the curious traveller might spend many days of thought and observation. Within the village, near the modern church of St. Margaret, there are some slabs of stone, enclosed within railings, on the surface of which will be observed some strange marks in the shape of indentations and circles. These slabs



are commonly known as the Cup and Ring Stones, and were removed to their present position a few years ago from their original site, a mile away along the hillside. Around the origin and true significance of these remarkable relics of an unknown age hangs a mystery which no one has yet been able to dissolve fully. Similar markings have been found in large numbers, and at various times, in other parts of England and Wales, and in Ireland and Scotland, and on the Continent in France, Switzerland, and Scandinavia. They have also been found in India on sepulchral monuments and on rocks, and in Europe they are often associated with the presence of stone circles, cists, and urn covers. Some authorities have suggested that they have a connection with a certain form of nature-worship, and others with the worship of the sun. These at Ilkley are remarkable for the sameness of the sculpturing in their general features, and for the apparent lack of design and arrangement ; and it has been argued from this that the hollowings were either sacred symbols or that their shape was specially adapted to some ceremonial use, and that the irregularity in their arrangement seems to prove that the sculpturing was either done by different persons working at the same time or by one person working at different times.

Few travellers, endowed with stout legs and sound mind, will leave the neighbourhood of Ilkley without climbing the steep hillside to the heights of Rombald's Moor, and spending at least a day in wandering about its vast stretches of heath-clad hill and vale. There are few moorlands in Yorkshire so remarkable as this great plateau, which lies on the summit of the watershed dividing the valley of the Wharfe from that of the Aire, and none in which objects of interest are so mingled with romantic and even savage scenery. No more advantageous method of exploring the moor can be adopted than by leaving Ilkley by the road which runs towards Ben Rhydding, climbing thence to the celebrated Cow and Calf Rocks, and turning westward from that point until the Panorama Rocks are reached. In pursuing such a route the great hydropathic establishment at Ben Rhydding forms a prominent object in the landscape. It stands at an elevation of 500 feet above sea-level, amongst luxuriantly-wooded surroundings, and though it is quite a modern structure, it has all the appearance of a magnificent castle, and is sometimes taken for a baronial mansion by innocent folk, while others compare it to the frowning strongholds which are perched on apparently inaccessible points along the Rhine. From the highroad above Ben Rhydding, a stiff climb over rocks and stones leads to the Cow and Calf Rocks. The Cow Rock is the termination of a vast mass of stone running along the edge of the moor from the west ; the Calf Rock is a smaller, but still huge rock, which lies on the hillside beneath, as if it had been suddenly arrested in a precipitous descent to the valley below. There is, of course, a local legend explaining the origin of these rocks. It is said that the dark moorland above them was once tenanted by a giant named Rombald, who was



THE COW AND CALF ROCKS

accustomed to take long journeys and to stride several miles at each step. On one occasion he was stepping from Great Alme's Cliff—about eight miles away, as the crow flies—to the Cow Rock, and being either absorbed in his affairs, or somewhat miscalculating the distance, he missed his exact footing, came down too heavily on the edge of the ridge, and broke off the great fragment now known as the Calf. The impression of the giant's foot is shown to this day, even as Buddha's is on the sacred mountain in Ceylon. From the summit of the Cow Rock there is a magnificent prospect of Wharfedale, which extends from one end of the valley to the other, and on a very clear day it is possible from this point to gaze across the great plain of York and see the sun shining on the long line of the Yorkshire Wolds, which separate it from the North Sea. About a mile across Rombald's Moor there is a shooting-tower which forms a notable landmark from all the high grounds of the surrounding country, and overlooks an artificial lake that serves as a gathering ground for the water of several becks or streams which drain the moors at this point. Hereabouts there are numerous matters full of interest to the archæologist and the lover of antiquities and folk-lore. On the shores of the reservoir are the remains of a supposed British encampment, consisting of circles, cairns, barrows, and the traces of roadways. Close at hand are certain mounds or heaps of stones, as to the origin of which various theories have been put forward. One authority says they are nothing but disused lime-kilns ;

another that they were certainly ancient burial-places ; a third that they were human dwellings. There are two local traditions respecting them—one that they were placed here through Satanic agency, for reasons only known to the Prince of Darkness ; the other, that the wife of Giant Rombald was accustomed to welcome him home by throwing stones at him, and that on several occasions she gathered her apron full of missiles and had the misfortune to let the contents slip out of it ere they could be used.

On the north edge of Rombald's Moor, at a little distance from the Cow Rock, and beneath a point which overlooks the eastern edge of Ilkley, there is a romantic defile called the Rocky Valley, which is remarkable for the extraordinary wildness of its scenery. It is of small compass, and may be walked through in a few minutes, but its masses of rock, overhanging their bases at threatening angles, and the richness of its vegetation, combine to make it well worthy of a longer stay. It is carpeted with heather, ling, bilberry, and crow-berry, and in places with soft, thick grass, and in the crevices of the rocks there are several varieties of moss, ferns, and kindred plants. All the way along the southern edge of Rombald's Moor from this point the hillside is rough and craggy, and the only paths, save those which are artificial and lead from Ilkley to the moors, are the tracks beaten by the mountain sheep which are seen on every side. On a fine evening in summer, when the sun is setting beyond the Craven Hills, nothing can be more delightful than to wander along the edge of the moor from this point westward, until the Panorama Rocks are reached and one of the most extensive views in Wharfedale opens out in front. From the head of these rocks the traveller will obtain a wonderful prospect of mountain scenery. Across the valley of the Wharfe at his feet rises Middleton Moor, 1320 feet above sea-level, and beyond it the familiar shape of Beamsley Beacon—or, as it is sometimes called, Howber Hill—at least a hundred feet higher. Further along the valley, distinguished by the broken masses of rock on its summit, rises Simon Seat, nearly 1600 feet high, and beyond it appears the giant mass of Whernside, which rises to an altitude of over 2300 feet. The long line of hill which encloses the head of Wharfedale, seen from this point, is Stake Fell, nearly 2000 feet above sea-level ; near it, dividing the valley of the Skirfare from Wharfedale, is Berk's Fell, a long mass of hill of the same elevation. Still closer at hand is Barden Fell, 1700 feet in height, and between it and the western edge of Rombald's Moor rises Kirkby Fell, close by Malham Cove, which has an elevation of over 1800 feet. To watch the sun set beyond these hills, and to note the beauty of colour which sweeps across their sides as twilight draws near, is to witness an effect of nature which will never be forgotten.

Although Ilkley has a history going back nearly two thousand years, it is to all practical intents and purposes a new town or magnified village, and has therefore had small time in which to produce famous folk ; but one of its adopted children has made a name for himself in two continents, and



THE MOORS ABOVE ILKLEY

is so closely associated with the story of Ilkley during the present century, that no account of the place would be complete which did not contain some reference to his career. To Ilkley folk the name of Robert Collyer, the blacksmith-preacher, is as familiar as the prospect of White Wells from the top of Brook Street, and to many people in England and America, who know nothing of Ilkley at first hand, it is familiar through his descriptions and reminiscences of the place where his early youth was spent. Collyer was a native of Keighley, but nine days after his birth he was taken to Blubberhouses, at the head of the Washburn valley, where he remained until he was thirteen years of age. When he was four years old he was sent to a school at Fewston, kept by a man named Willie Hardie, who had taken to the scholastic profession because he had suffered the loss of both legs. Collyer remained under Hardie's care for four years, and then, at the age of eight, was put to work in the mill at Blubberhouses, where he spent the next six years of his life. From his childhood he gave evidence of a strong love of scholarship, and during his life at Blubberhouses never lost an opportunity of acquiring knowledge. In his fourteenth year he was apprenticed to John Birch, the Ilkley blacksmith, to whom his father, Samuel Collyer, had been similarly bound many years before. At Ilkley Robert Collyer spent many years, employing every leisure moment in reading and in self-education. Of the aspect of the place in those days he has presented latter-day folk with the following word-picture:—

“It was at that time one of those quaint old villages, still to be found

here and there all over England, that bridge the chasm between the Middle Ages and these last times. Many of the houses were of an unknown antiquity, of one storey, covered thick with thatch, on which house-leek grew, and grass, with now and then a flower, whose seed had been blown there by some vagrant wind. The town beck ran down from the moor through the middle of the little street; the green old corn mill had been given by a noble lady, about six hundred years before, to the monks of Sallay, with a permission to her tenants to grind where they would when the monks had no water or had too much."

In 1850, being at that time twenty-six years of age, Collyer left Ilkley for the United States, and for some time followed his trade in Pennsylvania. He had begun to preach before he left England, and had been informed by an Ilkley cobbler who had heard him, that he would never succeed in the pulpit, because he was too fond of argument and reason. He continued his labours in America, and eventually became pastor of a Unitarian Mission in Chicago. His powers as a preacher and orator so quickly developed that he attracted great congregations, and when he removed to New York in 1880 as pastor of an important church in that city he was acknowledged to be one of the first half-dozen great preachers in the United States. Of his popularity some notion may be gained from the fact that one of his admirers journeyed across the Atlantic and came to Ilkley in order to purchase the anvil whereat Collyer laboured as a boy. In later years the blacksmith-preacher visited the village where his youth had been spent. That he has never forgotten it and its old-world associations has more than once been made evident by the warmth of his references to it in his writings and in his utterances from pulpit and platform.

### III

At a short distance from the parish church of Ilkley the river Wharfe is crossed by Ilkley Bridge, a time-worn edifice of three arches, which bears date 1739. From this bridge the traveller may obtain some delightful prospects along the Wharfe and of the hills which enclose the village ere he turns away up the hill on the north side of the river towards Middleton Lodge, the ancestral home of the ancient family of Middleton, who have held their lands in uninterrupted succession for many centuries. The original home of the family was at Middleton Low Hall, and the present house was built about four centuries ago. One of the earliest ancestors of this family of whom any record is known was Sir Peter de Middleton, who married Eustatia, daughter of Sir Robert de Plumpton, of Nesfield, in 1290, but the pedigree of his forbears can be traced for six previous generations. By marriage the Middletons have at various times been connected with some of the oldest families in the country. They intermarried with the Plumptons, Fitzwilliams, and Mauleverers in the



ILKLEY BRIDGE

fourteenth century; with the Vavasours, Gramarys, Mauleverers, and Hamertons in the fifteenth; with the Thwaites, Vavasours, Suttons, Gascoignes, Claphams, Calverleys, Townleys, Eltofts, and Walmsleys in the sixteenth; with the Ingilbys, Markhams, and Constables in the seventeenth; and in the eighteenth with the Fermers, Langdales, Claverings, Maxwells, and Stourtons. At the private chapel attached to the house the services of the Roman Catholic Church have been kept up for centuries, and the house itself contains many remarkable objects of antiquity, together with a notable collection of Roman, Celtic, and Saxon remains. The village of Middleton, which lies in a romantic situation at a short distance from Middleton Lodge, is a quaint little place which contains several old-fashioned cottages, one storey in height, and thickly thatched with straw.

One of the most delightful expeditions from Ilkley which the traveller can take in pursuing his journey along the banks of the Wharfe, is to cross the bridge and follow the river side on the north bank beneath the slopes and woods of Middleton, until a footpath turns away to the right and leads into the little hamlet of Nesfield. This is a very small, romantically-situated village on the brow of an eminence overlooking the river, and occupies the site of the Roman encampment called Castleburg, which, according to Whitaker, was one of the outposts of the fortress at Ilkley. "This post," he remarks, "was naturally strong, as the ground declines

rapidly in every other direction ; but it has been fortified on the more accessible sides by a deep trench, enclosing several acres of ground of an irregular quadrangular form. At a small distance without the enclosure an urn with ashes was lately found, but what seems to evince beyond a doubt that Castleburg was a Roman work, is the discovery of a massy key of copper, nearly two feet in length, which had probably been the key of the gates." After the Norman Conquest Nesfield was in possession of the Plumptons, of one of whom, Gilbert, who lived in the reign of Henry II., a curious story is told. He married an heiress, who appears to have been the ward of Ranulph de Glanville, in some clandestine fashion, and so aroused the wrath of the latter that he indicted Gilbert for rape, an offence then punishable by death. Gilbert was found guilty and sentenced to be hanged, and the rope was actually round his neck when Baldwin, Bishop of Worcester, in which city the proceedings had been taken, hurried to the place of execution, being well-nigh spent with running, says the old chronicler, and bade the executioners, in the name of God, to forbear. One of this Gilbert's successors helped to quell the Yorkshire insurrection during the reign of Henry VII., and was thanked by that monarch in an autograph letter. Of the ancient manor-house of the Plumptons there is now no trace at Nesfield—all that the traveller can see which savours of antiquity in the hamlet are the old-fashioned cottages and farm-buildings that occupy the site of the Roman camp of some eighteen centuries ago.

Some little distance along the quiet country lane which leads through woods and meadows from Nesfield towards Beamsley, there is a bye-path which turns aside to the river at a point near Addingham, a large village lying on the south bank of the Wharfe. A ferry-boat carries the traveller across the stream and lands him near Addingham Church. This village is the "Long Addingham" spoken of in the old ballad which commemorates Lord Clifford's share in the march which culminated at Flodden Field—

" From Penigent to Pendle Hill,  
From Linton to Long Addingham,  
And all that Craven coasts could till,  
They with the lusty Clifford came"—

and is still a lengthy, straggling place, with some ancient features and a good many new ones in the shape of mills and factories, and of the necessary rows of small dwellings which result from the establishment of industrialism. Here, in the days of the Roman occupation, there was another outpost of the stronghold at Ilkley, thus described by Whitaker, who made a careful survey of it: "There are two encampments, on different sides of the hill, about half a mile from each other: one in the township of Addingham, the other in the parish of Kildwick; the first commanding a direct view of Wharfedale, the second an oblique one of Airedale;



THE WHARFE NEAR ADDINGHAM



but though invisible to each other, both look down aslant upon Castleburg (Nesfield) and Ilkley. Within the camp on Addingham Moor are a tumulus and a perennial spring; but by a position very unusual in such encampments, it is commanded on the west by a higher ground, rising immediately from the foss. The inconvenience, however, is remedied by an expedient altogether new, so far as I have observed, in Roman castrametation, which is a line of circumvallation, enclosing both camps, and surrounding the whole hill: an area, probably, of 200 acres. A garrison calculated for the defence of such an outline must have been nothing less than an army. But it would be of great use in confining the horses and other cattle necessary for the soldiers' use, which, in the unenclosed state of the country at the time, might otherwise have wandered many miles without interruption. The outline of these remains is very irregular; it is well known, however, that in their summer encampments the Romans were far from confining themselves to a quadrangular figure, and when we consider their situation near the street, and the anxious attention with which they have been placed, so as to be in view of Ilkley or Castleburg, there can be little danger of a mistake in ascribing them to that people." The same authority, however, points out that since one of the supposed Roman outposts at this place is called Woofa Bank, which sounds like a corruption of Ulpha, or Offa, there is reasonable ground for the claims of those who suppose the works to be of Saxon origin. The modern history of Addingham is chiefly remarkable for the fact that the village was the scene of serious riots in 1826, consequent upon the introduction of machinery into the manufactories. In May of that year a mob, which numbered over a thousand people, armed with all manner of offensive weapons, from ancient guns to hammer heads, assembled in the village street for the purpose of breaking up the power-looms. This mob besieged a mill which was garrisoned by twenty men and boys, who had amongst them eight or nine fowling-pieces and considerable ammunition in the shape of stones. The siege was carried on for some time with considerable vigour, but with such disastrous results to the besiegers that they eventually retired, bearing their wounded with them, and having had much the worst of the encounter.

From Addingham there are two ways by which the traveller may go forward to Bolton Priory—the first by the highroad, which follows the line of the Wharfe until Bolton with all its wonderful beauties bursts on the view, the second by crossing the river again and resuming the by-lane which leads from Nesfield through Beamsley. Each of these alternative routes is full of charms and attractions, but the latter is perhaps the most delightful in summer, since it passes through a continuous succession of scenes of loveliness. Almost opposite the end of the path leading from the Addingham ferry back to the by-lane is another path, which turns up the hill-side to Black Foss Waterfall, where a fine stream of water leaps over the head of a rock and falls thirty feet into a beautifully-wooded glen. Further along



KEX BECK

the by-lane, at a little distance from Beamsley, there is a charming view of the Wharfe winding in a wide, sweeping curve at the foot of a high bank covered with wood. Beamsley itself, a curiously-situated little place of rare charm and attractiveness, lies at the foot of the great hill called Beamsley Beacon. It is a collection of old-world houses and farmsteads clustered about the banks of a delightful stream known as Kex Beck, which runs down through a thickly-wooded defile to join the Wharfe south of Bolton Bridge. There are some quaint almshouses here which were originally part of a hospital founded by Margaret, Countess of Cumberland, in the sixteenth century, and until a few years ago there was a very fine and ancient stone bridge across the stream, and an interesting old house called Ivy Cottage, in which were two British querns, and a remarkable stone oven built without the walls. From the summit of the Beacon, which is somewhat difficult to climb, there is a magnificent view of Wharfedale and of the hills and mountains stretching towards the north-west borders of the county; but what will most charm the traveller, and most fully engage his attention, will be the prospect of Bolton and its green glades, and of the Wharfe winding through them like a silver streak in a sea of emerald.

## CHAPTER XXXIII

### Bolton Priory and its Surroundings

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCENERY ABOUT BOLTON PRIORY—BOLTON BRIDGE—SITUATION OF THE PRIORY—LEGEND OF THE BOY OF EGRE-MOND—DESCRIPTION OF THE PRIORY—MONASTIC LIFE AT BOLTON PRIORY—PRESENT CONDITION OF THE PRIORY AND RUINS—THE CHURCHYARD AND ITS TOMBS—THE HALL AND RECTORY—BANKS OF THE WHARFE OPPOSITE THE PRIORY—VIEW OF WHARFEDALE FROM STORRITHS—THE WOODS AND RIVER—THE VALLEY OF DESOLATION—THE STRID—BARDEN TOWER—BARDEN BRIDGE—THE MOORS NEAR BARDEN.

#### I



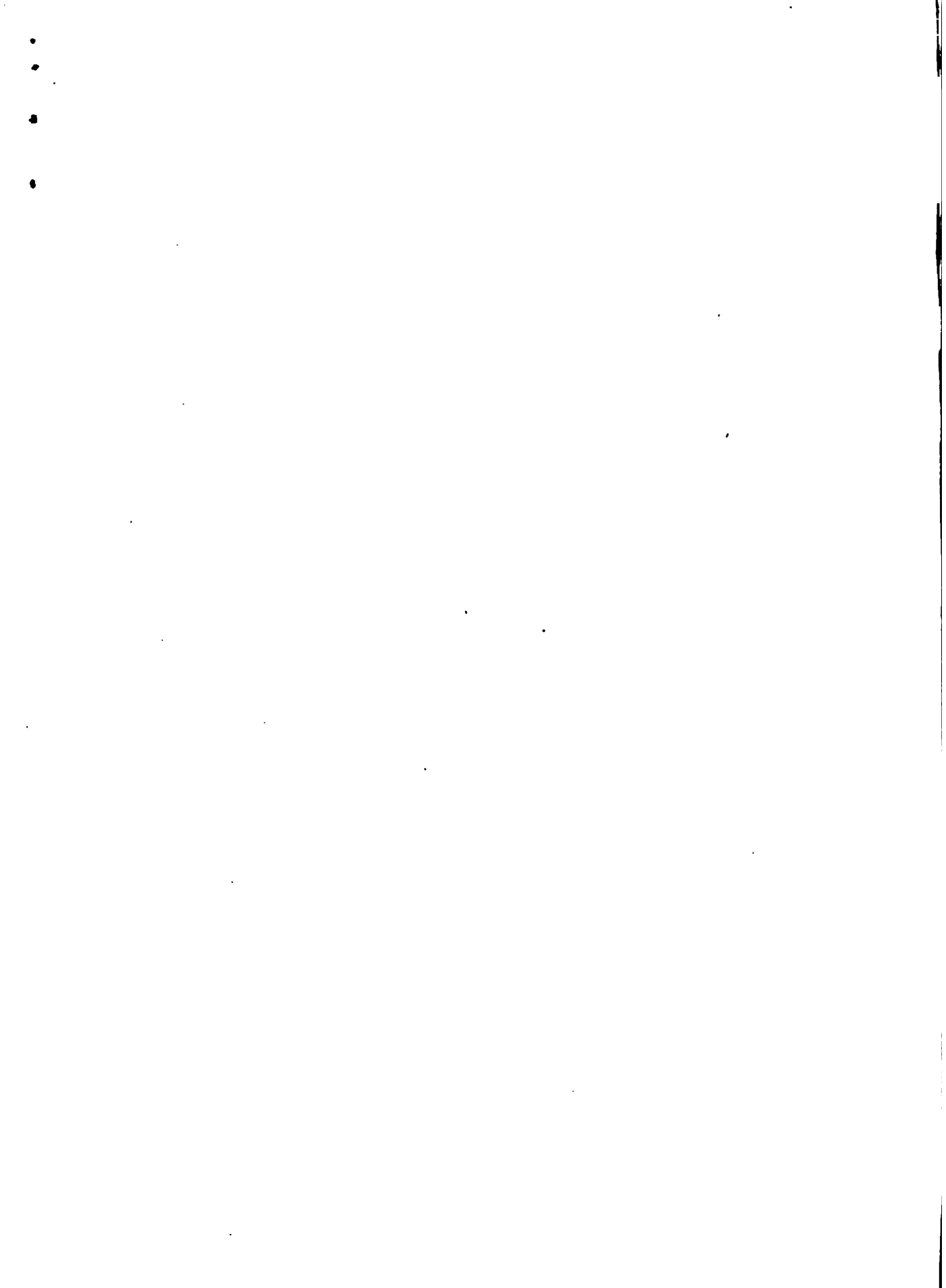
**O**F all the ruins and remains of the great religious houses in England there are none situated in the midst of such beautiful scenery as that which surrounds the ancient Priory of Bolton. Whether there is in the whole compass of the country such a perfect combination of everything that goes to make an ideal landscape as that presented in a prospect of Bolton Priory is a question which few lovers of natural beauty who have travelled widely in England will waste time in discussing—there is certainly nothing in Yorkshire, full of natural loveliness as the broad-acred county is, which can compare with this corner of Wharfedale. It is difficult to convey any adequate idea of its charm and beauty to the minds of those who have never visited it. The mere description of the grey ruins of the old Priory, of the windings of the Wharfe through the romantic woods which lie between Bolton and Barden, of the awfulness of the rushing waters at the Strid, and of the weird silences in the Valley of Desolation, of the views of mountain, moor, and stream from the hillsides above Storriths and from the lonely stretches of heather-clad fell beyond Barden, can do little towards giving the stranger an accurate impression of the wonderfully beautiful scenery of the district. It is almost as difficult to represent the charms of Bolton Priory and its surroundings by means of pictorial description. No artist can reproduce the atmosphere







*Bolton Priory.*





of the place nor catch the exact feeling which hangs about its woods and hills at a particular moment. Only those who have spent months at a time in exploring its beauties, and who have seen spring change to summer, summer to autumn, and autumn melt into winter, and winter round to spring amongst the hills which enclose it, can realise the intensity of its charm and the imperishable nature of its loveliness. To set eyes on Bolton Priory for the first time is an experience which must needs thrill the dullest soul, so perfect are all the features of the picture which presents itself to the eye. Southward of the ancient ruins lie wide stretches of luxuriant meadow-land from which the hills rise gently and gradually towards the summit of the watershed dividing Wharfedale from Airedale, sharply and boldly towards the frowning brow of Beamsley Beacon and the great moors which stretch beyond it. Through these meadows and beneath the ancient trees which line its banks runs the Wharfe, shallow but sparkling, keeping up a perpetual murmur as it swirls and eddies about the stones and rocks which form its bed. Where it sweeps to the north with a sudden curve stands the Priory, beautiful in its immediate situation above all other religious houses, fronted by a vast mass of rock covered with trees, and surrounded by oak and ash and elm rising from broad expanses of lawn and meadow. Northward, the river passes into such woods as no other corner of England can boast. Beneath their shade it winds and curves—through their midst come rivulets and miniature torrents from the hills and moors





BOLTON BRIDGE

to meet it. The variety of the scenery in these woods is amazing—at one time the eye is charmed by the softness of their aspect and the placid flowing of the river beneath their undergrowth, at another it is fascinated by the savage desolation which they present, and by the roaring and foaming of the Wharfe as it forces its way through the mighty rocks which hem it in. Nor is the last stage of the journey in the immediate neighbourhood of the Priory behind the other stages in beauty, for when the woods are passed the traveller finds himself gazing on the romantic tower of Barden rising in grey loneliness above the tree-lined stream and on the purple fells which loom high above the narrowing valley.

The ideal approach to Bolton is without doubt from the hamlet of Beamsley, from whence a narrow lane leads into the highway between Skipton and Harrogate at the foot of the steep rise extending to Hazlewood. At a short distance from the meeting of lane and highway stands the old Red Lion Inn, a quaint, pleasant hostelry with a good deal of suggestiveness of other days about it. It bears distinct traces of antiquity in exterior and interior appearance, and there are worse ways of beginning an inspection of Bolton and its glories than by sitting down in one of its low-ceilinged parlours to the consumption of well-fed beef and sound ale. Between it and the bridge there are several cottages of equally antique appearance, neat, clean, and gay with flowers. On a beam in one of them there was a few years ago the following inscription:—

*“Thou yat passes by gis way,  
One Ave Maria here yow say.”*

This beam and part of the cottage in which it stood was no doubt a remnant of the ancient bridge-chapel which stood close by. The bridge rises somewhat sharply from the road on either side, and from its northern parapet the traveller will find himself gazing on the broad stretch of meadow-land which lies between him and the Priory, whose grey walls can be seen rising above the trees in the distance. There are few lovers of natural beauty who pass this spot hurriedly—the temptation to linger on the bridge watching the swirling river, with its lights and shadows, and deep brown pools and background of wood and hill, is one not easily resisted. There are certain matters in the immediate foreground, too, on which the mind may reflect with comfort and profit. On the wide stretch of land beneath the bridge, the Royalist army under Rupert encamped on its way from Lancashire to the rout at Marston Moor, and on the same spot there were more warriors at rest for a period during the rising of 1745. Standing back from the river on its west bank is another hostelry of fame, the Devonshire Arms, from the windows and gardens of which there are excellent views of the hills and moors on the opposite side of the valley. A wanderer in Wharfedale, who visited this inn some fifty years ago, described his adventures there in a manner which makes one long for the return of the good old days which existed ere modern hotel fashions and notions had come into being. He speaks of making a dinner from trout, caught fresh from the stream outside, a chicken, boiled ham and beans with parsley and butter, and a pint of old port, and, moreover, of seeing a kitchen, with a white stone floor and hearth, duly swept and sanded, wherein was a plane-tree table of great size, scrubbed to snowy whiteness, and such a goodly collection of hams and bacons, encrusted with flour and salt, and hung from hooks in the ceiling, as would have made the mouth of a vegetarian water.

From Bolton Bridge to the immediate surroundings of the Priory, the traveller may journey by one of three ways. He may follow the river from the bridge itself until it washes the edge of the plateau on which the Priory stands, or he may cross the park and climb the tree-crowned hillock at his left, and descend again towards the ruins, or he may go round by the high-road, past the Devonshire Arms and its adjacent cottages, and enter the Priory grounds near the post-office by the Hole-in-the-Wall. The third of these alternate routes is that in most favour, simply because it is in direct communication with the railway station—thoughtfully placed in such a position that it does nothing towards spoiling the features of the landscape—and leads to the cottages whereat the visitors to Bolton find rest and refreshment, but the first is undoubtedly the most pleasing to the traveller who wishes to enjoy his first meeting with the Priory in comparative solitude. The path leads from the foot of the little stairway on the north side of the bridge in a direct line across the park, the river lying a little to the right. Half a mile further on, a grove of trees is passed, and the Priory and its immediate surroundings burst full on the view. Few admirers of rare



BOLTON PRIORY

prospects will care to hasten their steps from this point. The Priory stands on a promontory formed by the curving of the river, somewhat elevated from the level of the latter's banks, and surrounded by trees, amongst which the ash, elm, lime, and oak are most conspicuous. In the foreground stands the picturesque rectory ; to the left rises the hall with its gay garden front and ancient gateway ; here and there on both sides of the Priory are masses of masonry, great and small, which show where the outlying portions of the courtyards and cloisters extended to ; in the background are the deep woods, and above them the purple of the moors and fells. There is no period of the year when this scene is not beautiful, for no climatic condition can affect it ; but on a fine May morning, a September evening, or a moonlit night it is the absolute perfection of an English landscape.

There are few lovers of English literature who are not conversant with the legend of the founding of Bolton Priory, mainly through the version which Wordsworth has given of it in his narrative poem entitled, "The Force of Prayer," and through the less familiar lines of Rogers, who dealt with the tradition in romantic fashion. Both Rogers and Wordsworth keep closely to the accepted legend that the Priory was built by the Lady Alice Romillé, in memory of her son, the Boy of Egremont, who was accidentally drowned in the Wharfe in attempting to cross the Strid, and their versions of that occurrence are worth a momentary attention—Wordsworth's for its matter-of-fact presentation of what actually happened, and Rogers's for its imaginative fancifulness :—

## WORDSWORTH.

Young Romilly through Barden woods  
Is ranging high and low ;  
And holds a greyhound in a leash,  
To let slip upon buck or doe.

The pair have reached that fearful chasm  
How tempting to bestride !  
For lordly Wharf is there pent in  
With rocks on either side.

This striding-place is called the Strid,  
A name which it took of yore :  
A thousand years hath it borne that name,  
And shall a thousand more.

And hither is young Romilly come,  
And what may now forbid  
That he, perhaps for the hundredth time,  
Shall bound across the Strid ?

## PICTURESQUE YORKSHIRE

He sprang in glee,—for what cared he  
 That the river was strong and the rocks were steep?  
 But the greyhound in the leash hung back  
 And checked him in his leap.

The boy is in the arms of Wharf,  
 And strangled by a merciless force;  
 For never more was young Romilly seen  
 Till he rose a lifeless corse.

## ROGERS.

At Embsay rung the matin bell,  
 The star was roused in Barden fell;  
 The mingled sounds were swelling—dying,  
 And down the Wharfe a henn was flying;  
 When near the cabin in the wood,  
 In tartan clad and forest green,  
 With hound in leash and hawk in hood,  
 The boy of Egremond was seen.  
 Blythe was his song—a song of yore—  
 But where the rock is rent in two,  
 And the river rushes through,  
 His voice was heard no more.  
 'Twas but a step! the gulph he pass'd,  
 But that step—it was his last!  
 As through the mist he wing'd his way,  
 (A cloud that hovers night and day),  
 The hound hung back—and back he drew  
 The master and his merlin too!  
 That narrow place of noise and strife  
 Received their little all of life!

In plain prose the legend of the foundation of Bolton Priory is as follows:—

In the year 1120, William de Meschines and his wife Cecily, daughter and heiress of Robert de Romillé, who held vast possessions in the Craven district, founded a priory of Augustinian Canons, in honour of our Lady and St. Cuthbert, at Embsay, a village lying between Skipton and Bolton. This they endowed with the manor and lands of Embsay and the church of the Holy Trinity at Skipton and its chapel of Carlton adjacent. To these endowments, Cecily, anxious for the safety of her own soul and those of her parents, subsequently added lands at Stratton, and the village and mill of Kildwick, and thus the Embsay establishment was not badly furnished with the goods of this world. The manner of the conveyance of the lands at Stratton was peculiar, they being handed over to the monks by the ceremony of laying a knife on the high altar of the church. This ceremony

was performed by Cicely de Meschines and her son-in-law William Fitz-Duncan, nephew of David, King of Scotland. William had married Alice, or, as the poets call her, Adeliza de Meschines, and she, on the death of her parents, took the name and heired the possessions of her mother's family, the de Romillés. She and her husband had two sons, the elder of whom died, leaving the second, commonly known as the Boy of Egremond, as sole heir of the vast estates of the family. It was this youth who was drowned at the Strid, into which he was drawn by the hanging back of his hound as he essayed to leap across. Tradition has it that the accident was witnessed by a forester, who was unable to render any assistance, and who immediately repaired to the Lady Alice, and, anxious not to shock her by breaking the bad news too suddenly, assumed an air of profound grief, and put the question to her, "What is good for a bootless bene?" to which she, having some intuitive feeling that harm had come to her son, made answer, "Endless sorrow!" The accepted legend further relates that in memory of the dead boy she caused to be erected a stately priory at Bolton, wherein she installed the monks of Embsay, whom she so liberally endowed and provided for that they became rich above all other monastic bodies. But much as one would like to believe that this pathetic and romantic legend is a piece of veritable history, one is bound to remember that certain facts have been established beyond doubt which appear to prove that it is after all but a legend. There are ancient charters and documents in existence—some of which are mentioned by Dugdale in his *Monasticon Anglicanum*—which show that when Alice de Romillé gave the monks of Embsay her manor of Bolton in exchange for their estates at Stretton and Skibeden, her son, William de Romillé (who by a pedigree exhibited in Parliament in 1315, is proved to have been her only son), was not only alive, but a consenting party to the transaction. An ingenious solution of the whole difficulty, as between legend and historical evidence, is afforded by the suggestion that William de Romillé was really drowned at the Strid after the signing of the charter in which he is referred to as being alive, and that the monks of Embsay took advantage of his mother's grief and piety to exchange their bleak situation on the Skipton hills for the sheltered seclusion of the most attractive corner of Wharfedale.

## II

Whatever the absolute truth as to the founding of Bolton Priory may be, there is no doubt that it was richly endowed by Alice, or Alicia, or Aaliza, or Adeliza de Romillé with lands at Bolton and Stede, and broad acres between Posford (Posforth Gill) and Spectbeck (Kex Beck), and considerable domains lying between the Wharfe and the Walkesburn (Washburn). As time went on, other piously-disposed persons lavished gifts and charities upon the fortunate monks, amongst them being Henry

de Trencher and his wife Cecily, William Vavasour, Simon de Braan, Alan de Wintworth, and the Clifford and Percy families. The churches of Harewood, Keighley, Skipton, Carlton, Kildwick, Marton, and Broughton belonged to the Priory, and at the end of the thirteenth century its annual income was reckoned at £867, 17s. 6d.—a very great sum indeed in those times. About the same time, its monks possessed 2193 sheep, 713 horned cattle, of which one-third was oxen, 95 pigs, and 91 goats. The considerable benefactions received at the outset of its career, and the subsequent gifts lavished upon it by later patrons, enabled the first monks of Bolton to build quickly. First came the magnificent church, and then in due order the cloisters, refectory, dormitory, kitchens, and cellars, with all the accessories and offices of a great conventual establishment. Fine lodgings of carved timber were provided for the prior, with a private chapel and offices adjacent, and a great guest-chamber was built for the accommodation of visitors and wayfarers. The gateway was erected, gardens and terraces laid out in the grounds, trees planted, and fish-ponds dug, and all round about rose the outhouses wherein dwelt the men-at-arms and the dependants, the labourers and servants of the establishment.

There is in the possession of the Duke of Devonshire, to whom this magnificent domain belongs, an ancient manuscript *Comptus*, or Household Book of Bolton Priory, wherein are many details and particulars of great interest concerning the life lived by the monks of mediæval times. The prior was the head of the house, and had his own lodgings, his own men-at-arms, and his own servants, and he was not only landlord of the vast estates of the Priory, but also their manager and steward. He kept the great seal, dispensed patronage, negotiated loans, and bought fresh possessions. He entertained royal and distinguished visitors, dressed well and ate well, and rode to the chase attended by a numerous retinue of servants and retainers. He undertook journeys to York, and London, and Rome, and set out in company with a splendid cavalcade, and disbursed great gifts on notable occasions. Next in office to him was the sub-prior, who governed the establishment when the prior was absent. After him in dignity came numerous lesser brethren. The sacristan had charge of the church, its relics, plate, and valuables, and was responsible for the due conduct of the services, and to him accrued all the fees and gifts made at the high altar. The bursar saw to the creature comforts of the house, and was master of refectory, kitchen, and cellar. The guest-master was responsible for the comfort of visitors; the infirmarar was a skilled leech, and saw to the sick and ailing. Of the other inmates of the house and its purlieu, there were generally about eighteen canons, or fully professed monks; four lay-brethren, who were usually artists, and decorated the church and cloisters; twenty gentlemen-retainers trained in the art of war; one hundred and twenty-six free servants; and a large number of slaves or bondsmen, who performed the menial offices of the establishment.

Of the food and drink required for the sustenance of all these people, and of the various expenses of their daily life, the Household Book gives many interesting particulars. In one year they used 319 quarters of wheaten bread ; 112 quarters of barley meal ; 80 quarters of oatmeal ; 80 quarters of a mixture made of wheat, barley, and oats ; 636 quarters of malted oats ; 39 quarters of oatmeal for the dogs ; and 411 quarters of provender for the horses ; with 147 stones of ewe-milk cheese, 64 oxen, 35 cows, 1 steer, 140 sheep, 69 pigs, 113 stones of butter, and great store of venison, fish, and poultry. As to liquor, the servants and slaves drank beer, which was brewed in large quantities from malted oats ; the monks, gentlemen-retainers, lay-brethren, and guests drank wine. There is an entry recording the purchase in one year of 1800 gallons. In celebrating one feast of the Assumption they spent £90 in wine, and a considerable sum in sugar, spices, almonds, garlic, mace, and many other condiments and delicacies, for which they had to send to Boston, in Lincolnshire. As to the sources from whence their annual revenue was obtained the *Comptus* affords some interesting information. The farms, mills, church-dues, and fair-dues produced a sum equal to about £2000 of our present currency ; but the greater part of the community's income was derived from the sale of wool, and there is an entry which shows that in one year the prior sold to a travelling wool-merchant the results of a year's shearing, which amounted in value to a sum equal to £8000 of our money. There is another entry recording the hiring of 1010 sheep-shearers for one day for the gross amount of



BOLTON PRIORY



£9, 18s. 4d., or 2d. each. Of the purchase of books during the period covered by this Household Book (1290–1325), there are only three records given—one of them of the buying of a copy of the "Book of Sentences" for 30s. ; but there are numerous records of the purchase of inks, colours, and gold, at York and Boston, whereby one may infer that there was a scriptorium here in which the artist lay-brothers employed their art in copying and illuminating manuscripts.

On the 25th January 1540, Richard Moon, last of the priors of Bolton, surrendered the house to the representatives of Henry VIII. There were then fourteen canons in residence. The annual income had decreased, and was officially returned at £302, 9s. 3d. gross, and £212, 13s. 4d. net. For two years the house and lands remained in possession of the Crown, but in April 1542 they were sold to Henry Clifford, Earl of Cumberland, for the sum of £2940. His successors held them until 1635, when they passed, by the marriage of Elizabeth, daughter and sole heiress of the last Earl of Cumberland, to Richard, Earl of Burlington, into possession of the latter, in whose family they remained until 1748, in which year they passed to the Dukes of Devonshire by the marriage of one of their number with Charlotte, the last inheritor of the Earls of Burlington.

### III

The remains of the Priory of Bolton may fittingly be divided for inspection into two parts—(1) the nave of the ancient church, which is used as the parish church of Bolton, and wherein divine service has been celebrated without break for many centuries ; and (2) the roofless choir and the remaining parts of the establishment, long since dismantled and in ruins. At the west end of the nave is all that was raised of the tower which the last of the priors, Richard Moon, was engaged in building when the dissolution of the religious houses was ordered. At the time of the surrender he had been at work on the tower for at least twenty years, and if he had been permitted to finish it, the west front of the nave, which is of the style of the thirteenth century, would have been taken down, and the internal arch of the tower have opened into the present church. The fragment of the tower is full of beautiful and deeply interesting work. On a frieze over the doorway is a commemoration of the founder, whose name is given, after the quaint fashion of those days, by a sign :—

*In the yer of our Lord MCCCII R. — begaun  
this foundacion on q̄toho sowl god habe merce, amen.*

On a buttress at the south of the tower is a figure in cap and gown, which is commonly held to be that of a pilgrim. He holds a staff in his right hand and a round shield under his left arm, and on his breast is embossed a cross *fleury*. On the north and west are the figures of hounds,

which are supposed to bear some cryptic reference to the de Meschines, as original founders of the house. In the spandrils above the doorway are the arms of the Cliffords and of the Priory, and above them rises the beautiful window, an exquisite specimen of the Perpendicular style. Once within the doorway of the tower—which is, of course, being unfinished, quite open to the sky—the original west front of the nave is seen. It is in the Early English style, and has a doorway, deeply recessed, which is ornamented with fifteen mouldings and surmounted by three lancet lights, with banded shafts. On entering the nave, now fitted up with great taste and beauty of decoration as a parish church, the traveller will be struck by its dimensions. It is about 88 feet in length, 48 feet in width, and 55 feet in height. Its north side is principally in the Decorated style; its south is Early English. On the north side there is an aisle, separated from the nave by one cylindrical column placed between two of octagonal form. The present roof was relaid about the middle of the present century, and contains a good deal of the oak used during the relaying undertaken by the last prior. There is some quaint and interesting carved work in the beams, and the corbels of the springers are noteworthy as being the work of the lay-brethren of the Priory. On the south side are six windows filled with Munich glass, in which are presented thirty-six groups illustrating the life of the Saviour from the Annunciation to the Ascension. Along their base is a triforium or wall-passage, which is communicated with by staircases from the south wall and from the base of the west window. The north aisle has three windows of exquisite design, in which there are still some remains of thirteenth-century glass, and above the alternate cylindrical and octagonal pillars which divide it from the nave, there is a clerestory of four single and plain lancet lights. At the east end of the aisle, an oak screen, designed after the Perpendicular style, shuts off the organ and vestry, and is practically an enclosure of the ancient chantry, or Beamsley Chapel. In its north wall is a piscina, and underneath the flooring is a vault filled with bones discovered during modern restorations. There is a tradition, referred to by Wordsworth in his "White Doe of Rylstone," that beneath this chapel were interred several members of the families of Clapham and Mauleverer, each body in an upright position:—

". . . through the chink in the fractured floor  
 Look down and see a grisly sight :  
 A vault where the bodies are buried upright !  
 There, face by face, and hand by hand,  
 The Claphams and Mauleverers stand . . ."

—but there is no proof that any bodies were interred after this fashion in any part of the Priory, though various writers have stated that the coffins were seen as recently as 1854, and that there were nineteen of them, one of which measured nearly seven feet in length. Here are three brasses

commemorating the family of Morley, into whose hands Beamsley passed from the Claphams, and outside the screen there is a very finely carved *Agnus Dei*, in stone, discovered during modern excavations of the site, and supposed to have occupied a prominent position above the high altar. Most of the remaining objects of note in the nave are entirely modern, and largely explanatory of themselves. The interior of this part of the Priory was entirely renovated and restored by Sir George Street, R.A., about thirty-five years ago, and in its arrangements and decorations is essentially modern.

The ruined portions of the Priory, and its exterior remains are even more interesting than the modernised nave. Almost facing the west door



ARCADING IN CHOIR

of the latter is the square castellated tower which now forms the centre of Bolton Hall, but which in ancient times was the gateway of the Priory. Its appearance, as it was in those days, has been made familiar to most people by Landseer's well-known picture, "Bolton Abbey in the Olden Time." Here, in the rooms above the archway, were kept the records and documents of the establishment. On the south side of the nave was the cloister court, with an arcade running round three sides of it. From this court there were doors into the nave, and near the eastern one there is another, giving admittance to the south transept, near which is a holy-water stoup of beautiful design. Near the end of the south transept a passage leads through an archway to the chapter-house, which was an octagonal building about 30 feet in diameter and 12 feet in each side of the seven internal faces, that on the west side being the entrance. There were here about thirty-five stalls, ornamented after a similar fashion to the sedilia in the choir. The refectory occupied the whole of the south side of the cloister court; the common-room and the dormitory were reached from it by a door in the south-east corner. On its west side there were several buildings devoted to the use of the bursar, who here kept his stores, and provided lodgings for visitors and guests. A second court is supposed to have extended towards a spot close by the present rectory, and to have included the prior's lodgings, but there are few traces of buildings left hereabouts.

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Nearer the river there are some further faint evidences of buildings, which are thought to have been the infirmary. The most important part of the ruins is the choir, in which there are many interesting matters and objects. Its interior length, including the width of the transept, is 115 feet 8 inches; its width, 40 feet 4 inches. It is entirely roofless, and its flooring and altar-piece are covered with grass. On each side there are nine stalls, canopied by intersecting Saxon arches, which were used by the Canons of the Priory. Nearer the high altar, and at a lower level, are ten stalls, under similar arches, which are supposed to have been for the use of the *Conversi*. On the south side of the east window there are four sedilia, the bases of which are semi-hexagonal, enriched with trefoil panels, enclosed in alternately reversed triangles.

Both stalls and sedilia are obviously of much earlier date than the fabric of the choir, and have evidently been carefully incorporated in the latter during the fourteenth-century restoration. The choir has neither aisles nor triforium, and is lighted by five windows of three lights each on each side, and by a great east window in which only a fragment of tracery remains. Behind the high altar there is a canopy of a tomb within a recess in the wall, which is said to have been the burial place of Lady Margaret Neville, who died in 1318. Here, too, is the grave of one of the Lords Clifford, John, who was slain at Meaux during the reign of Henry V. Many other members of the Clifford family are supposed to have been interred in a vault beneath one of the



BOLTON PRIORY

two chantry chapels which stood on the south side of the nave. Beneath the choir, in all probability, rest the remains of the foundress of the priory, with those of her husband, and presumably of the boy who was drowned at the Strid, but there is no direct evidence of the fact, though Dr. Johnstone, a Pontefract antiquarian who visited Bolton in 1670, says that he saw an effigy of the Lady Romillé in the choir here, and that it was beneath a canopy. In the south transept there is a stone slab, which, when first discovered, presented the figure of an Augustinian canon with hands joined together in the attitude of prayer. The figure has now disappeared, but according to the following inscription it was meant for an effigy of Christopher Wood, who was Prior of Bolton about the end of the fifteenth century:—

*Hic jacet d'n's xro  
fer Wod guo'd'm p. or.*

At a little distance is the grave of William Carr, rector of Bolton for over half a century, with whom Wordsworth stayed during his visit to Wharfedale in 1807, and who was mainly responsible for the laying out of the beautiful roadways and paths which intersect the woods lying between the Priory and Barden Tower. The only remnant of the south transept left standing is the western wall; the north transept is in better preservation. Above the intersection of nave, choir, and transepts there was without doubt a central tower, but there is nothing in the existing records of the Priory which gives any information as to its history or fate.

The churchyard which surrounds the ancient Priory on the north side is remarkable for its ideal situation, and for its associations with Wordsworth's "White Doe of Rylstone." Here it was that the white doe used to linger during the performance of divine service within the nave, and though the romantically-inclined visitor will look in vain for

"that single grave,  
That one sequestered hillock green,"

whereon the mysterious animal used to couch, he or she will find no difficulty in imagining the picture of Bolton in the old days which Wordsworth draws in the opening lines of his poem. Here and there in the churchyard there still remain some gravestones of a date prior to the Dissolution of 1540, but they are much worn and their inscriptions well-nigh illegible. There are two tombstones here which commemorate two centenarians—Stephen Brigg, aged 105, and John Headache, aged 104 years. But the most conspicuous object in the churchyard is the memorial of the late Lord Frederick Cavendish, brother of the present Duke of Devonshire, who was murdered in the Phoenix Park in Dublin in 1882. It stands at the north-west corner, and is in the form of a cross of Runic design, of considerable height, rising from a pedestal and block, and carved from a fine white freestone obtained near Bradford. The inscription on the pedestal in-



BOLTON HALL

incorporates the tribute paid by Mr. Gladstone to the murdered man in the course of the speech in which he officially communicated the news of his assassination to the House of Commons :—

“To the beloved memory of Lord Frederick Charles Cavendish, son of William, 7th Duke of Devonshire, and of Blanche Georgiana, his wife. Born November .1836. He went out as Chief Secretary to Ireland, ‘full of love to that country, full of hope for her future, full of capacity to render her service,’ and was murdered in the Phoenix Park, Dublin, within twelve hours of his arrival, May 6, 1882. *The Lord grant thee thy heart's desire, and fulfil all thy mind.*”

This memorial to the murdered statesman, one of the most accomplished and amiable members of the great family of Cavendish, was erected in 1883, at the sole cost of the tenants on the Bolton Priory estates. Three years later another monument to his memory was erected at Bolton by the electors of the West Riding of Yorkshire, whom he had represented in the House of Commons for several years. This took the form of a magnificent fountain, which stands on an eminence at a little distance from the churchyard gate, on the side of the highway leading to Barden. The structure is hexagonal in shape, and is raised upon a platform of several steps. Its six sides are

arcaded and a groined roof covers the basin. An explanatory inscription runs round the cornice above the arches, and at each angle of the former is a boldly-carved grotesque. The parapet wall, is decorated by the arms of the Cavendishes, Lyttletons, Boyles, Cliffords, and Howards, which are sculptured in the panels. The upper part of the memorial forms an open lantern of six converging ribs, above which is an enriched pinnacle, the top of which is rather over 40 feet from the base of the platform beneath.

Bolton Hall, which occupies a position immediately facing the western extremity of the Priory and its remains, is a house of limited dimensions, and is chiefly used as a shooting-box during the grouse season. It was built from the remains of the Priory gateway and offices, and by walling up the outer and inner arches of the former a fine apartment has been made, in which some antique work in the way of vaulting and groining may be seen. In the drawing-room of the hall there are some notable and interesting portraits. One, known as the Boy of Egremont, and said to be by Sir Peter Lely, is of Lord Charles Clifford, elder brother of the second Earl of Burlington, who is painted in hunting costume and in company with two dogs, and who died at a youthful age in 1675. There are also portraits of the famous Anne, Countess of Dorset, Pembroke, and Montgomery, the indefatigable repairer of castles and towers; of Henry Clifford, last Earl of Cumberland; of Richard, Earl of Burlington, and of George Calvert, Lord Baltimore. There is also a curious picture, said to be the work of Lucas de Heere, which represents William Brooke, Lord Cobham (*ob.* 1596), his second wife, Frances Newton, and Johanna, her sister, standing behind a table at which six children are seated. The table is spread with dishes of fruit, amidst which are the figures of a parrot and a toy dog. At the back of the hall there is an antique memorial of the old days of the Priory in the archway which spans the highroad near the stables. This was an aqueduct which brought water from the hills between Bolton and Skipton to turn the wheel of the monks' mill, which was situated where the stables now stand.

One of the most picturesque objects in the general view of the Priory and its surroundings is the rectory, a most charmingly situated house which faces the path leading from Bolton Bridge. This was originally a grammar school, founded by the Earl of Burlington in 1700, in accordance with the desire of his uncle, the Hon. Robert Boyle, a younger son of the first Earl of Cork, who had left a certain portion of his estate in trust for the erection of either a school or an almshouse at Bolton Priory. It was accordingly known as the Boyle School for a long period, and has over its porch the Boyle coat-of-arms and an inscription in Latin which explains its origin. It was probably built out of the remains of the Priory, and has an appearance of great antiquity. The incumbent of the Priory church for the time being was invariably appointed head-master of the Boyle school, so that the house served the double purpose of parsonage



THE RECTORY

and school-house. In 1874, on the resignation of the then rector, the Rev. Canon Robinson, the Charity Commissioners sold the house to the Duke of Devonshire, and built a new school and residence on the hillside at Beamsley, the old school-house becoming the rectory pure and simple. It is an ideal residence for a country parson, and its grey walls, quaint gables, and wealth of trees and flowers make in themselves a picture which it is worth travelling many miles to see.

Close by the east end of the Priory the traveller will perceive a foot-path which leads across the meadow to the Stepping Stones, some sixty in number, which are the only means afforded at this point of proceeding from one bank of the Wharfe to the other. How long these stones, some of which are very much worn by the rushing of the water and the countless feet which have trodden them, have been placed in position there is no evidence to show, but it seems most probable that they were securely wedged into the stream long ages ago in order that people from the hillsides opposite might cross the river in order to attend the services at the Priory. The crowds of tourists and sightseers who flock to Bolton on public holidays find considerable amusement in crossing or attempting to cross the Wharfe by these primitive contrivances ; but there are times when the water sweeps high above the stones, and goes raging down the valley with a force that would carry persons who happened to be crossing off



their feet to certain destruction. The Wharfe hereabouts is somewhat erratic in its conduct, and it is said that instances have been known of a person having crossed the stepping-stones with ease and safety and being unable ten minutes afterwards to set foot upon them because of a sudden rush of water. On the farther bank of the river, near the stepping-stones, and facing the east end of the choir, there is a remarkable cliff, or rock, rising high above a deep pool formed by a sudden bend in the stream's course. It is of a deep purple colour, and it and the thick growth of trees above it cast a wide shadow over the water beneath and give the entire spot a sombre and striking appearance. Across country, going up the hillside from this cliff, there are a few scattered cottages and homesteads in the district called Storriths, and at the end of the lane which leads towards them from the Harrogate road there is a high mound, the formation of which is almost artificial in shape, from whose heather-clad summit a magnificent view of the Wharfe and its surroundings in the stretch between Bolton and Barden may be obtained. This view is particularly impressive on a spring or summer evening, when the sun is setting beyond the hills and moors which close in the prospect on the west ; but it is one of great beauty at all times, since it affords a widespread picture of river, wood, hill, and meadow which is rarely equalled for charm and variety. But there is scarcely a square yard of ground within the purlieu of Bolton from whence the traveller may not obtain delightful prospects—every step taken up the hillsides, or along the river, or through the woods, reveals some new charm, and the only regret which the lover of nature feels is that he cannot spend the whole of his life in such a favoured corner of the earth.

## IV

The course of the Wharfe from Bolton Priory to Barden Tower lies amidst an uninterrupted succession of views and prospects of wonderful loveliness, each distinct from the other, and all full of a rare surprise because of their continual variety. At one moment the traveller—who, if he wishes to enjoy the beauties of Wharfedale at this point to the full, should prefer pedestrianism to any form of conveyance—finds himself gazing on some bewitching vagary of the swirling river ; at another, on the gaunt outline of a distant hill rising above the woods at its feet ; at a third, on a prospect of wide meadow, pastoral and peaceful in its simplicity, shaded by ancient trees and dotted with cattle ; at a fourth, on some picturesque bridge of grey stone, beneath which a mountain beck tumbles and sparkles on its way to meet the Wharfe ; at a fifth, on a wild and broken stretch of mighty rocks through which the pent-up stream pours with an irresistible rushing and running ; at a sixth, on a sudden opening out of the valley with a foreground of meadow and tree, and in the distance the long ridge of the rock-crowned fells which seem to bar all farther progress. Imme-



MEETING OF THE WATERS

diately after leaving the churchyard by the wicket gate in the north-west corner there is another gate and path, near the Cavendish Memorial Fountain, which leads to a favourite point of vantage, known as the Hartington Seat. The view of the Priory and its surroundings from this point is perhaps familiar to every one through the numberless pictures of all sizes and qualities which have been made of it, but not even Turner himself has been able to do justice to its beauty. A little farther on, at the foot of the steep hill which leads towards the woods and the Strid, the road passes into a wide stretch of pasture-land lying along the banks of the river, with a wooden bridge in the foreground and the slopes of the deer park rising above the woods across the stream. Beyond the wooden bridge there is a charming bit of river scenery known as the Meeting of the Waters, where seven wood-crowned islands break up the Wharfe into a series of foaming rock-strewn channels. Hereabouts there are several objects of interest. On the left bank of the river, on the side of the carriage road, there is a mountain ash tree, the roots of which grasp a large stone after the fashion in which a bird takes a nut into its claw. On the opposite bank is the grey stone bridge over Posforth Gill—a charming defile along which it is very pleasant to wander, and at the head of which there are two waterfalls, the largest having a fall of 50 feet. Near these waterfalls, skirting the base of the deer-park hill, is the stretch of wooded glen known as the Valley of Desolation—a name which is something of a puzzle to those who visit it



The Valley of Desolation.

in summer, since it is one of the greenest and most charming bits in the district. Years ago, however, it was literally a valley of desolation—a terrific storm of thunder and lightning stripped the oaks of their bark, and in many cases tore the trunks to pieces, and a vast flood of water poured down the gill and washed away the trees and shrubs along its banks. Many of the blasted oaks still remain, gaunt and spectral amidst the prevalent green luxuriance of the valley.

As the traveller draws near to the famous Strid, he is made aware of its contiguity by the sound of its waters. If there have been great rains along the upper reaches of the valley of the Wharfe, the sound is thunderous in its quality—it is heard at a considerable distance at all times, and the fact that something strange is at hand is evidenced by the appearance of the river as the Strid is approached, the swirling and seething of the brown flood being so marked as to betoken some neighbouring source of commotion. A sudden bend of the path through a grove of trees brings the Strid in full sight, and it is very possible that a first prospect of this celebrated natural curiosity may give the traveller a feeling of disappointment. There are no vast and towering rocks as at Gordale Scar, and the entire scene is on a small scale. On either side of the river are overhanging woods, the west bank being much steeper and wilder than the east, and between them is a curious bed of rock, split and fissured into irregular, formidable masses, some of which are of strange and fantastic shape. In the midst of this



THE STRID

expanse of rock there is a narrow cleft, opening into a channel 120 feet in length, 4 feet in width, and from 12 to 30 feet in depth, through which the river, gradually confined as it approaches from the north, pours with a tremendous velocity. At first sight it appears as though no man of average strength need fear to leap from one side to the other, but a short stay on the verge of the rocks convinces one of the danger of the undertaking, even when the Wharfe is in one of its gentlest moods. In the opinion of many people, the actual Strid is by no means the easiest place where a leap might be made. It lies at the head of the channel, and is marked by a huge boulder rising in the water between each bank. The leap is taken on to this boulder and thence to the rock facing it, and though the actual width of the necessary strides is inconsiderable, the surface of the stones is so smooth and slippery, by reason of the continued fretting of the water, that it is almost impossible to retain a foothold upon them. Immediately beneath the striding-place, in a great basin formed amidst the hollowed-out rocks, there is a whirlpool wherein the débris brought down by the waters circles round and round until a new flooding of the river sweeps it away. The sight of the circling waters in this eerie-looking pool, the roar of the torrent pouring round the rock above them, and the angry appearance of the river as it rushes away to less confined quarters is enough to deter the bravest from attempting the leap which proved fatal to the Boy of Egremont, but numerous performances and attempted performances of the feat take place every year. Of the successful performances it is needless to speak—in the

case of the unsuccessful attempts, the same scene is invariably witnessed. The leap is taken, the foot slips, and the leaper disappears in the boiling waters beneath. In some cases he is rescued with little delay and no injury; in others he is never seen again until the river casts up his dead body at one of the shallow stretches farther down stream. There is a tradition that, whenever a fatal accident is about to happen at the Strid, a white horse is seen to rise from amidst the foam of the rushing waters and to float above them for an instant, ere it disappears from the astonished gaze of whoever happens to behold it.

From the neighbourhood of the Strid a steep path leads along the left bank of the Wharfe to a point of vantage in the woods above, which is known as the Pembroke Seat. From this there is a very fine prospect of the valley beyond the Strid, with Barden Tower and Barden Bridge in the foreground and the moors and fells in the neighbourhood of Appletreewick in the distance. The famous tower stands lonely and deserted on the hillside; beneath the bridge the Wharfe runs as smoothly and gently as in the meadowlands of Barkston. It is a pleasant walk from the Pembroke Seat to Barden Tower, and the tower itself is only less interesting than Bolton Priory. It is now embowered in trees, but at a little distance from it the great moors begin reminding the traveller of the days when this district was wild and bare, and tenanted only by the wild boar (*barden*, the home of the wild boar), and by herds of red deer. Originally a keeper's lodge—



J. B. G. G. G.



BARDEN BRIDGE

one of the six erected by the Cliffords of Skipton at Drebley, Laund, Holgill, Barden, Ungayne, and Gamelsworth for the accommodation of their gamekeepers—it was converted into a residence by Henry, Lord Clifford, in 1485. This Lord Clifford was the one commonly known as the Shepherd Lord, from the fact that after his father had been deprived of his estates because of his adherence to the Lancastrian cause, during the Wars of the Roses, the family fell upon evil times, and he himself was brought up by a shepherd in Cumberland. When the Yorkist cause finally triumphed, the family estates were restored to Henry, who was at that time about twenty-six years of age, and had received no education worthy of his rank. He was distinguished for his virtues and his love of a quiet existence, and he much preferred the solitude of Barden Tower to the pomp of Skipton Castle. He resided at Barden during the whole of the reign of Henry VII., and for some time after the accession of Henry VIII., and only came forward from his retirement to lead the men of Craven at the battle of Flodden Field, on which occasion he is said to have displayed all the warlike qualities of his ancestors. He was then in his sixtieth year, and for ten years longer he continued his peaceful avocations at Barden, where he and the Augustinian canons of Bolton made considerable investigations in astronomy and chemistry. After his death in 1523, Barden Tower was at times the residence of his son, but from an inventory prepared in 1572, it would appear that the Shepherd Lord was the only one of his race who

regarded it as fitted for a permanent residence. According to this document, the only apartments furnished in the last-mentioned year were the hall and kitchen, which seems to argue that the lords of Skipton used the tower as a hunting-lodge, and occasionally refreshed themselves there, but never stayed in it for the night.

When the famous Anne Clifford, Countess of Pembroke, succeeded to the family estates in the troublous times of the Civil War, she found most of her castles and great houses in ruins. It was not until some years later that she was able to commence her self-appointed task of rebuilding or restoring them. On each of the houses and strongholds so restored, she caused an inscription to be placed which set forth the particulars of its renovation, and each of these inscriptions wound up with a reference to a particular passage of Holy Writ and a *Laus Deo*. That at Barden, engraved above the principal doorway on the south of the tower, runs as follows:—

**This Barden Tower was repayrd  
by the Ladie Anne Clifford Counte  
esse Dowager of Pembroke Dorsett  
and Montgomery Baronesse Clifford  
Westmerland and Vessie Lady of the  
Honor of Skipton in Craven and High  
Sheriffesse by inheritance of the  
Countie of Westmerland in the yeares  
1658 and 1659 after itt had layne  
Winoths ever since abovt 1589 when  
Her mother then lay in itt and was  
Greate with child with her till  
nowe that it was repayrd by  
the sayd lady. Isa. Chapt. 58, ver. 12.  
God's name be praised.**


The tower remained in good condition for two centuries after this, and about 1670-80 was used as a residence by members of the Burlington family. It was entire so far as the fabric was concerned in 1774, but soon afterwards it was despoiled of its lead and timber, and allowed to fall into its present ruinous condition. In its courtyard there is a remarkable old house, used as a farmstead, which is in its way as full of interest as the tower itself. It dates from the thirteenth century, and has walls of immense thickness, while the oak beams which support its roof are at least three hundred years old. The ancient chapel of the tower is very interesting, and there are some relics of antiquity in it and the farmhouse which are noteworthy as having once belonged to the Countess of Pembroke. The surroundings of Barden are indeed in every way full of charm and interest, and the ruined tower standing between the wild loneliness of the moors on one side and the pastoral stretches of the valley on the other forms a fitting sentinel to the fairyland which lies between it and Bolton Bridge.

## CHAPTER XXXIV.

### The Wharfe from Barden to Cam Fell

SURROUNDINGS OF THE WHARFE BETWEEN BARDEN BRIDGE AND APPLE-  
TREEWICK—EARL SEAT AND SIMON SEAT—SKYREHOLME—PERCIVAL  
HALL—TROLLER'S GILL AND ITS LEGEND—STUMP CROSS CAVES—  
APPLETREEWICK—THE ANCIENT FAIR AT APPLETREEWICK—ROMANTIC  
HISTORY OF THE CRAVEN FAMILY—HARTLINGTON—BURNSALL—  
HEBDEN—LEGEND OF THE DEVIL'S BRIDGE—THORPE-SUB-MONTEM—  
LINTON—THRESHFIELD AND ITS GRAMMAR SCHOOL—GRASSINGTON  
AND ITS SURROUNDINGS—ASSOCIATIONS OF THE OLD GRASSINGTON  
THEATRE—KILNSEY AND ITS CRAG—VALLEY OF THE SKIRFARE—  
KETTLEWELL—BUCKDEN—HUBBERHOLME CHURCH—LANGSTROTH-  
DALE—SOURCE OF THE WHARFE AT CAM FELL.

#### I

N the immediate vicinity of Barden Tower there are two highways leading towards the villages of Upper Wharfedale, one passing along the foot of Barden Fell by way of Drebley to Burnsall, the other skirting the opposite bank of the river, underneath Earl Seat and Simon Seat, and reaching Burnsall by way of Appletreewick and Hartlington. Both these roads are remarkable for the beauty of the prospects to be obtained from them at various points, and both command wide views of mountain and valley, wood and river. The first is the shorter path to Upper Wharfedale, but the leisured man who is not particular as to time or destination will find most pleasure and interest in following the second one, which crosses the Wharfe at Barden Bridge, just below the tower, and winds away at the base of the fells towards Howgill. On a bright morning, at any period of the year, but especially in early summer, this excursion is one of the most delightful which the traveller can take in this part of Wharfedale. The highroad between Barden Bridge and Howgill is quiet and even solitary, and the views of the Wharfe winding along in the green valley beneath are as full of rest to the eye as





*Simon Seat by Earl Seat  
from Burnsall*

they are instinct with charm. Across the river rises the long swell of the Barden moors, culminating in the peak of Barden Fell, 1660 feet above sea-level, at the foot of which lies Drebley, a quaint, irregular hamlet raised on a plateau overhanging the river, where at one time stood one of the six hunting-lodges of the Cliffords when they kept their state at Skipton. At the head of the valley lie the woods and slopes of Appletreewick, backed by the dark moors of Hebden and Conistone; on the right hand rise the steep acclivities of Earl Seat and Simon Seat, covered on their lower slopes with trees and shrubs, and at their summits with rock and heather and bracken. The air hereabouts is delightfully fresh and invigorating, and the lover of pedestrianism will feel that its exhilaration is of such a nature that he could walk on under its influence for ever. This feeling is largely due to the fact that from Barden the land rises a good deal, and the mountain air blows more freely down the valley than it does amongst the thick woods of Bolton and of lower Wharfedale.

At Howgill, a little hamlet lying at the foot of Simon Seat, on the banks of a rivulet running down to the Wharfe, there is a path which leads up the hillside to the summit of this very remarkable eminence. It is a somewhat stiff climb to the curiously-shaped rocks at the top, for the lower slopes of the hill are steep, and the moorland which lies beyond the edge of the woods which cover them is thickly carpeted with heather and bracken. No traveller, however, who wishes to form a thorough acquaintance with Wharfedale, or who has a liking for wide-spreading prospects of hill, moor,

and valley, should neglect to climb Simon Seat. On the way up, the summit of Earl Seat, lower down the dale, comes into close view, but it is not until the moorland is gained that the huge pile of rocks which crowns Simon Seat becomes apparent. These rocks, which are known as the Hen Stones, are of very curious shape, and the man unlearned in geology might well spend several hours in examining their nooks and crannies. The highest point of Simon Seat is about 1590 feet above sea-level, and commands magnificent views of the surrounding country in Wharfedale and Airedale, and of the district lying between the Wharfe and the Nidd, but the most pleasing prospect which it affords is that of Appletreewick, lying immediately beneath it, a picturesque, old-world place on a shelving hill which slopes over green pastures and deep woods to the banks of the river.

From the summit of Simon Seat a path leads down the hillside towards Skyreholme, a small village which contains some noticeable old houses, and stands at the entrance to a romantic defile known as Troller's Gill, up which the traveller should certainly journey ere he goes forward to Appletreewick and Burnsall. There is at Skyreholme one of those mills which were the pet aversion of Whitaker a century ago, but its presence does nothing towards despoiling the valley of its charm, and is scarcely notice-



PERCIVAL HALL

able amongst the high hills which overlook it. A little way out of the village, on the right-hand side of Troller's Gill, stands Percival Hall, an ancient Elizabethan house which is said to have been one of the favourite harbouring-places of Nevison, a noted highwayman. It is somewhat curi-

ously situated, and is full of interest for its quaint gables, doorways, and mullioned windows. It is known locally as Parsible or Parsifal Hall, in accordance with the prevalent pronunciation of the country-side, but its name is probably derived from a former appellation of Parson's Hall, it having at one time been the residence of a clergyman named Haye. Troller's Gill, which opens from the valley beneath Percival Hall, is a fissure which extends for about half a mile through rough crags of limestone, and is only a few yards in width at its broadest part, while the rocks above it rise to an average height of 60 feet. Through this fissure rushes a stream of water which is at all times considerable, and after heavy rains exceptionally fierce and vigorous. The bed of the stream is largely encumbered by large boulders of limestone, and the rushing of the water against these obstacles occasions a perpetual roaring which is disconcerting to imaginative folk in the daytime, and absolutely terrifying after nightfall. Around this gloomy defile many legends, still believed in by the folk of the district, centre—all of them having some reference to the ghost, spectre, or shape known in Yorkshire as the Bargest. In Hone's "Table Book" there is a reference to the Troller's Gill ghost, which is there spoken of as the Spectre-Hound. The name of the defile, according to a ballad freely quoted by local chroniclers, springs from an adventure which some person known as the Troller, or Trowler, had with the Bargest some generations ago. A more profitable employment than searching into this superstition may be had by proceeding northward to the high ground lying between Wharfedale and Nidderdale and examining the caves of Stump Cross, a series of interesting caverns discovered about forty years ago by some people of the neighbourhood. They extend within the hillside for several hundreds of fathoms, each cave communicating with the others. Some of them are of considerable size, and all are full of remarkable stalagmites and stalactites, which vary in shape and colour in a surprising degree. Although they are not so widely known, probably because of their comparatively inaccessible position, these caverns are quite equal in interest to the more famous ones of Derbyshire, and no traveller in Upper Wharfedale should neglect an opportunity of inspecting them.

From Skyreholme, at the foot of Simon Seat, a lane leads to the picturesque village of Appletreewick, one of the most attractive and charming little places on the banks of the Wharfe, ideally situated amongst moor, meadow, hill, and river scenery, and as grateful to the lover of nature as to the disciples of Izaak Walton, who flock there in numbers at one season or another. It consists of one principal street and some minor lanes or alleys, and its houses are as quaint as the most fervent admirer of ancient things could desire. It can further boast the possession of one of the most comfortable inns in Wharfedale, and is, in all respects, a desirable place of rest for the pedestrian. Appletreewick—correctly *Appletreewick*, and locally known as Apterick or Apteruck—is one of the oldest settlements in

the district. At the time of the Domesday Survey the manor was in possession of Dolfin and Orme, but the three carucates of land and their surroundings soon afterwards passed into possession of the de Romillés, from whom they fell into the hands of the de Essetons. James de Esseton had free rights of mining for iron and lead in this manor under Edward I., and he further exercised the rights of stallage and gallows, which implies that a market was held under his lordship and that he administered justice as seemed good to him. From the Esseton family the manor passed into the possession of the prior and monks of Bolton, and subsequently into that of the Yorkes, from whom it went to swell the Clifford estates. During the period of the lordship of the community at Bolton, Edward II. granted, in 1311, the right to hold a fair at Appletreewick on the vigil and feast of SS. Simon and Jude, 27th and 28th October, and this has been held ever since, though it is now no more than an annual village merry-making.

Until the beginning of the present century the ancient fair of Appletreewick was one of the most important stock fairs and annual markets in this part of Yorkshire. It was a great fair for ponies, cattle, and sheep, and the former were brought there in large numbers from the Scottish Lowlands, while the cattle chiefly came from the Highlands, and the sheep were of a famous black-faced breed. The place where the live stock was exposed for sale is still pointed out under the name of Sheep Fair Hill. There was a great demand for the diminutive ponies of the Lowlands in this neighbourhood in the old days, not merely for the purpose of drawing wood and peat from the adjacent moors, but because the thrifty Wharfedale farmers objected to paying the tax placed on all horses over thirteen hands high. Naturally the great influx of visitors to Appletreewick Fair placed a severe strain on the resources of the little village, and as it had but one inn at that time, every house was transformed into a hostelry for the time being, the branch of a tree or some similar distinguishing mark being placed over the doors as an indication that refreshment and accommodation was to be had within. One great feature of the fair was the presence of a vast stock of onions, a vegetable largely used as a staple article of food in the dales at that time. All along the village street there were stalls and tables on which were set out various wares—farmhouse utensils, hosiery, shoes, sweet stuff, trinkets and cheap jewellery, the wares of Scottish travelling drapers and packmen, and blankets and winter clothing from the woollen districts. Great feasting and merry-making accompanied and succeeded the business of the fair. At night there were dances in the barns and in the farmstead kitchens, and at one period a company formed from the inhabitants of the village used to perform selections from Shakespeare's plays in the great hall of the mansion which once belonged to the Craven family, and which still stands, sheltered by a fine row of elms, near the entrance to the village.

One of the most interesting matters in connection with the history of

Appletreewick is the story of the rise to fame and fortune of Sir William Craven, a native of the village, in the middle of the sixteenth century, who subsequently became Lord Mayor of London, and founded the family now represented by the Earls of Craven. According to some authorities, his father was a peasant of Appletreewick; according to others, a farmer; and that his origin was humble is proved by the fact that when he was apprenticed to a linen-draper, the parish authorities paid the necessary fees for his indentures. At the end of his apprenticeship, William Craven felt a



APPLETREEWICK

desire to proceed to London and improve his position, and thither he accordingly travelled, in company with a carrier, the journey occupying three weeks. In London he entered the service of a mercer, and was distinguished by his honesty and attention to business. He afterwards embarked on ventures of his own, and having amassed considerable wealth, engaged in the affairs of public life, with the result that he was made Lord Mayor of London in 1611, and soon afterwards knighted. That he did not forget his native place and its surroundings, is proved in the memorials of his benevolence which exist at Burnsall close by. He repaired the church there and built a grammar school, and probably made other gifts and provisions in the parish, of which all records have been lost. When Burnsall church was restored in 1812, an inscription was found which testified that it had been repaired and beautified at the only cost and charges of Sir William Craven, Knight, early in the seventeenth century, while about the same time

the following verses, which Whitaker believed to be the work of the parish clerk who is alluded to in their closing lines, were placed on the walls of the choir :—

“ This church of beauty, most repaired, thus so bright,  
 Two hundred pounds did coste Sir William Craven, Knight ;  
 Many other workes of Charitie, whereof no mention here  
 True tokens of his bounty in this parish did appeare,  
 The place of his nativitie in Appletreewick is seene,  
 And late of London citie, Lord Mayor hee hath beene.  
 The care of this work so beautiful and faire,  
 Was put to John Topham, Clerk, by the late Lord Mayor,  
 Of that most famous citie of London so brighte,  
 By Sir William Craven, that bounteous knight,  
 Borne in this parish, in Appletreewick towne,  
 Who regarded no cost so the work was well done.”

The son of this Sir William Craven lived a life which was even more romantic and adventurous than that of his father. According to Whitaker, he formed a romantic attachment to the Queen of Bohemia, and served under her unfortunate royal spouse in testimony of his devotion to her and hers. After the death of the king and the return of the queen to this country—she was Elizabeth, sister of Charles I.—he received the reward of his patience and faithful service, for the royal widow married him, and her nephew, Charles II., conferred upon him a peerage of the United Kingdom under the title of Baron Craven. “ Thus,” remarks Whitaker, “ the son of a Wharfedale peasant matched with a sister of Charles I.—a remarkable instance of that Providence which raiseth the poor out of the dust and setteth him among princes, even the princes of his people.”

## II

The road from Appletreewick to Burnsall passes through two ancient hamlets, Woodhouse and Hartlington, which are worth a momentary consideration because of their associations with other days. The former now possesses few evidences of the picturesque buildings which used to stand between the road and river, and Hartlington has little to show that it was once the abode of a powerful Norman family. It was owned soon after the Conquest by Ketel de Hartlington, who is presumed to have been a favourite of the Conqueror's, and one of his chief supporters at Hastings. In 1368 Thomas de Hartlington held the manor of that name, then valued at 66s., messuages and lands at Burnsall and Thorpe of the value of 10s., and many other possessions in the neighbourhood. The last of the Hartlingtons died about the end of the fifteenth century, and all traces of their hall or manor-house have disappeared, though it is supposed to have occupied a site contiguous to Hall Garth. There is a tradition in this district, referred to

somewhat erroneously by Whitaker, that a man named Waters was roused from his sleep one night by a voice which bade him arise and save life. He leaped from his bed, seized his bow and arrows, and went towards Appletreewick, where he came upon a band of ruffians engaged in molesting a young woman, who proved to be a member of the great family of Clifford. Waters, being an expert archer, soon put the villains to flight, and the lady escaped without serious injury. Her preserver was rewarded by the Cliffords with a gift of land at Woodhouse, and his initials were to be seen some years ago carved on the beam of an old house there.

From the road between Hartlington and Burnsall, as the latter place is approached, there is a very fine view of Wharfedale as it stretches away north and south. Burnsall itself, lying across the river at the foot of the fine stone bridge which spans the Wharfe at this point, is one of the most picturesque villages in Upper Wharfedale, and also one of the most interesting. Far away from any large town, and removed by wide stretches of moor and fell from even a railway line, it enjoys a delightful solitude, and



Burnsall.

is visited a good deal by folk who prefer quietude to the bustle of better-known holiday resorts. The Wharfe at this stage of its course is distinguished by its width, and by the splendid curve which it describes towards Appletreewick pastures. There are various features of the neighbourhood of Burnsall and in the village itself which are of much interest, and there can be little doubt that the place had an existence in very remote ages,



BARDEN FELL FROM BURNSALL

and was the scene of some form of pagan worship. Its church, which has frequently been restored during the past three centuries, and was entirely rebuilt about forty years ago, is a very fine structure, and contains many notable evidences of antiquity, of which the most important is an undoubtedly Saxon font, curiously carved. It consists of nave, chancel, north and south aisles, south porch, and tower, and possesses a fine peal of bells which can be heard some distance along the valley in both directions. There are some quaint and curious stories told in the village of one of its former vicars, John Adcock, who appears to have been a good specimen of a Yorkshire oddity. On one occasion he found on entering the pulpit that he had forgotten or lost his sermon, whereupon he announced that he would read a passage of Holy Scripture worth ten of it. On another, he discovered that some naughty person had carefully mixed the leaves of his sermon, so that the original sequence was quite altered, and had then stitched them firmly together, whereat he intimated to his congregation that he would read the manuscript straight through and leave his hearers to sort out the sense of it for themselves. Once, celebrating a marriage service, the bride demurred at taking the vow of obedience to her husband, whereupon the parson quietly remarked that it was a rather awkward clause and they would skip on to the next. This eccentric person was at one time the tutor of the famous Eugene Aram, who spent some time under his care and instruction at Burnsall. Near the parsonage here there is a spring called the Parson's Well, which is one of four in or about the parish. One, Thor's Well, is undoubtedly a remnant of the old days of pagan times, and



there are strong evidences that at it, and at St. Margaret's and St. Helen's Wells, the old pagan superstition of well-worship, which was afterwards grafted into Christianity, was in force until comparatively recent years. Until the middle of the last century it was a favourite amusement of the folk hereabouts to visit the wells on Sunday evenings for the purpose of drinking the water, with which they were accustomed to mix sugar. Another survival of the old days is seen at Burnsall in the shape of the May-pole on the green near the river. There is an amusing local chronicle to the effect that certain inhabitants of the adjacent hamlet of Thorpe-sub-Montem once attended a May-day celebration at Burnsall, and were so covetous of the larger village's possession of a May-pole that they decided to steal the latter when the Burnsall folk had gone to sleep some night. Accordingly they returned a few days later and, under the shades of night, took up the May-pole and carried it to their own village, where it was duly erected on the village green. When the Burnsall folk became aware of their loss their grief and anger was great, and they immediately set out to explore the surrounding country. They searched several neighbouring villages without success, but at last, taking a view of Thorpe from a neighbouring hill, they saw the glittering vane of a May-pole flashing in the sunlight, and recognised it for their own property. Upon this they returned home, reinforced their numbers, and bearing down in irresistible strength upon Thorpe, rescued their cherished possession and bore it home in triumph.

About a mile from Burnsall lies another interesting village, Hebden, situate on the banks of the gill or beck which bears its name. The land hereabouts was held in the twelfth century by Uchtred, son of Dolfin, from whom it passed to the Hebden family, one of whom, William de Hebden, is mentioned as holding it about 1300. The situation of this village is in accordance with its name (*heb dene*—the high valley) and is wild and romantic in the extreme. The Hebden gill or beck runs through a deep ravine which extends from the north bank of the Wharfe to the great water-shed which separates Wharfedale from Nidderdale. A century ago Hebden presented a very rude and primitive appearance. Its manor-house, at the south end of the village, was surrounded by one-storied cottages, thatched with heather and often built of wood, in which there were neither proper windows nor doors, and wherein dwelt a somewhat primitive set of folk. The village is now modernised and distinguished for its neatness, and is possibly not so full of interest as it was half a century ago. Here about that time lived one of the old-fashioned schoolmasters, Thomas Howsam, whose sole claim to the position appears to have been that he was an old soldier and had been wounded in the wars. His fee for the education of a pupil was one halfpenny per week. There was here also some years ago a remarkable family named Bowdin, resident at Hole Bottom Farm, the male members of which, eight in number (a father and his seven sons) were accomplished musicians, and had formed themselves into a band.

There is in the local records of this district a legend as to the founding of a bridge which crosses one of the numerous gills, becks, or streamlets that intersect the moorlands lying between this part of Wharfedale and the upper stretches of the Nidd. It is commonly known as the Devil's Bridge, and is said to have been built by the fiend under the following circumstances:—Some centuries ago there lived in the hamlet of Thorpe-sub-Montem a noted shoemaker named Ralph Calvert, who was famous for the excellence of his work, and amongst whose principal patrons was the Abbot of Fountains. To this great ecclesiastic Calvert was accustomed to carry new footgear at Christmas and Midsummer, journeying on foot to Fountains Abbey across the moors and hills. On one occasion, being about to set out on this journey early in the morning, he ate a very hearty supper, and on retiring to rest dreamed that he was already on his journey and had reached a lonely spot in the hills. Here the devil suddenly appeared to him and proceeded to apprehend his person, whereat he awoke trembling, told his wife of his dream, and vowed that he would henceforth abstain from heavy suppers. Next morning Calvert set out for Fountains Abbey, and in due course arrived there, transacted his business, and turned his face homewards. He had progressed to within a few miles of home, when he came to a mountain gill which he usually crossed dryshod, but which was now covered by a foaming torrent. It struck him that this was a strange occurrence, but he sat down by the bank and divested himself of his shoes and footgear, and was wading across, when it was borne suddenly upon his mind that this was the very spot of which he had dreamt. In order to keep up his spirits, he began to sing, but as he put on his shoes again on the opposite bank of the stream, the chorus of his song was taken up by another voice, and Calvert, looking up, was astounded to find himself in the presence of a gentlemanly



person who presently informed him that he was the Evil One. Calvert could think of no better fashion of propitiating the arch-enemy than by offering him a drink out of a certain stone bottle which he carried about him. This offer was accepted with many signs of gratitude and approval on the devil's part, and the latter was so pleased with the shoemaker's liquor that he there and then gave expression of conferring upon his new friend any favour which the latter might ask. Calvert thereupon requested him to build a bridge at the spot at which they stood. The devil promptly consented, and bade the shoemaker return to the place in four days, after which they separated—the contents of the bottle being no doubt exhausted. Calvert made the best of his way home, and lost no time in telling his wife of the extraordinary things which had happened to him. During the next three days there was little else talked of in the district but the promise made to Ralph Calvert by the devil, and on the morning of the fourth day quite a numerous assemblage set out to see if the latter had really been as good as his word. With them went a certain ecclesiastic, who carried with him a phial of holy water. Arrived in sight of the spot where the shoemaker and the devil had hobnobbed together, the multitude perceived that the bridge was really built, and of an admirable construction, and as there appeared to be nothing doubtful about its actual existence, the priest presently baptized it with holy water, and the folk amused themselves by crossing and recrossing it. There were crosses at each end of this bridge until the middle of the seventeenth century, when the Puritans tore them down. The bridge had previously been repaired by Sir William Craven, who practically rebuilt it on the old foundation. There is a very plain and obvious derivation of its name, seeing that it carries the road over the Dibble rivulet, but there are people in this neighbourhood at the present time who firmly believe that it was first erected by the Evil One.

### III

The hamlet of Thorpe-sub-Montem, from whence Ralph Calvert set forth on the journey which was to make him acquainted with the devil, is one of the most curious places in the world, and the traveller who sees it for the first time will not wonder that the men of Burnsall experienced some difficulty in finding the May-pole which the Thorpe folk had stolen from them. The highway between Burnsall and Grassington passes near Thorpe, but affords no prospect of it, for the houses lie as at the bottom of a cup, with high hills surrounding them on every side. No one would suspect that a village lies in this strange situation, but when it is once reached, Thorpe-sub-Montem—a name rightly deserved and literally true—is full of interest to the geologist, the lover of folk-lore, and the casual observer. High above its picturesque houses and cottages towers its mountain, Elbolton, which rises to a height of over 1100 feet. On the summit of this eminence, the



LINTON

ceremonies of the sun-worshippers were performed long before the existence of races of whom we have any record, and in its depths is a cave wherein men lived in a long dead age. When this cave was first discovered, there were twelve human skeletons sitting in a row around the entrance, and in their midst were traces of a hearth and fire, and all about them were the bones of great animals, long since extinct in these islands. All about Elbolton linger memories and traditions of fairy times, and there are people in the neighbourhood who still believe in the existence of the good people, and would not be surprised to see them dancing on moonlight nights on the green slopes of the hills. Probably because of its curious isolation from the rest of the world, Thorpe is exactly the sort of place wherein old-world legends and traditions are likely to linger long. It was at one time famous for its trade in footgear, and almost every man in the place was a maker of boots, shoes, or sandals. In mediæval times these village shoemakers were largely patronised by the members of the adjacent religious communities, to whom they carried their wares twice a year, even as Calvert was doing when he met the devil.

Linton, the next village on the way from Burnsall to Grassington, is one of those pretty, old-fashioned places in which the lover of nature feels a strong inclination to linger for ever. Through its midst runs a stream which descends from the fell sides beyond Thorpe and joins the Wharfe a

little distance away. Like Thorpe, it is surrounded by hills, and, after the fashion of all isolated places, has a distinct life of its own. According to Whitaker, Linton during the eighteenth century was a self-supporting community, depending on nothing outside its own limits for the necessaries or even the simple comforts of life. Every man in the place owned the land he lived on, farmed it, and sustained himself and his family with the produce. Every householder, save one, kept a cow, and all were possessed of sheep, geese, and a few hogs, which they fattened for winter. All the women were proficient in the mysteries of spinning—they spun wool from the fleece, and flax from the distaff and cord, and the garments which they and the men wore were made from home-spun and of home manufacture. The women wore no ribbons or bedizenments, and the men no buckles to their shoes. There was no inn in the village, and no poor-rate, and if the folk did not amass wealth, they were always well provided for and thoroughly satisfied with their lot. There is a substantial proof at Linton of the power of its native-born folk to make money in the shape of an almshouse or hospital which was founded by one Richard Fountain about the middle of the last century. Born in the village, he subsequently proceeded to London, where he made a fortune, a portion of which he devised to certain trustees, who were directed to purchase land at Linton, and thereon erect a hospital for the accommodation of deserving persons. This hospital is of striking appearance, and accords well with the rest of the village, most of the buildings of which are quaint and old-fashioned, and in some cases of considerable antiquity. The church contains some Saxon and early Norman work, and is somewhat remarkably situated, and one of the two bridges by which the stream is crossed here is notable for the curiously primitive nature of its construction. There was living in this village about the middle of the last century a nephew of Sir Isaac Newton, one Benjamin Smith, who was Rector of Linton from 1742 to 1776, and left behind him a reputation for great eccentricity. His great occupation was dancing, an accomplishment of which he was so passionately fond that he now and then travelled over to France—in those days a long and tedious journey—in order to keep himself thoroughly acquainted with the last fashionable step. It is related of him that he never missed a day without practising his steps in front of a large mirror, and that he trained a native of the village to accompany his dancing on the violin, with a strict proviso that he should keep his back to him, and never dare to glance over his shoulder at the parson's antics. It is further related that upon one occasion the rustic fiddler's curiosity proved too strong for him, and that he dared to peep at his employer, who caught sight of the flagrant breach of etiquette and immediately kicked the offender and his fiddle out of the room.

Threshfield, another picturesque and interesting village a short distance from Linton, used to be as famous for the manufacture of besoms or brooms as Thorpe-sub-Montem was for the making of shoes. It is a quaint and

curious old village, with an ancient hall and some old sixteenth-century houses, and it and the adjacent lands were once in the hands of the ill-fated Nortons of Rilston, who forfeited possession of it and their other estates in consequence of their participation in the rebellion known as the Rising of the North. It was subsequently in possession of the Cliffords, who had here a deer-park, richly stocked with fallow deer. At the Grammar School of Threshfield several men of note were educated, and the place is especially interesting as being the school whereat Whitaker, the great historian and topographer of this region, received the rudiments of learning. The besom trade is said to have been introduced into Threshfield by a wandering Scotsman, cattle-lifter, moss-trooper, and general adventurer, who came here about the middle of the seventeenth century and built himself a stone house. His descendants were long famous as manufacturers of besoms and dealers in horse-flesh, and about ninety years ago they possessed an extraordinary pony, named Pigeon, which was never beaten in a race during ten years. One of the shoes of this pony is preserved on a stable door of the house which replaced the one originally built by the first Ibbotson, and within this house there are certain relics connected with the history of his family, which has lived on the spot where he settled for nearly three hundred years. At one time this family used to keep a large number of what were locally called Jagger ponies, which were employed in carrying coals from the mines near Ingleton to the district surrounding Pateley Bridge, in Nidderdale. They travelled across country by way of a pack-horse track which ran almost entirely through the lonely moorlands, and the string was invariably preceded by a gaily-caparisoned piebald animal, which wore a number of bells, the jingling of which, it is said, could be heard for far distances over the moors as the ponies plodded on through the night.

From Threshfield, a short walk along the highway and across the Wharfe leads to Grassington, a village charmingly situated at an elevation of 700 feet above sea-level. This place, which from its name seems to have been a Saxon settlement, and has a history dating back to Norman times, has of late years become a popular resort, and is annually visited by large numbers of tourists, who seem to experience no difficulty in reaching it, in spite of the fact that it is removed by many miles of wild country from the nearest railway station. That it should attract visitors is no wonder to those who first set eyes on its various charms and beauties. It has a splendid situation on the east bank of the Wharfe, which here trends to the north, and although it is perched at such a considerable height, it is not at all bleak or exposed, being sheltered from east and north by the high ground at its rear. The village itself has a quaint and interesting appearance which has so far not been spoiled or appreciably altered by the modernity which has crept into it of late years, and its immediate surroundings are exceptionally picturesque and romantic. As a centre for the exploration of Upper Wharfedale and of the various show-places lying

on the moors between the Wharfe and the Aire, it possesses great advantages, and few journeys can be more delightful than that from Skipton to Grassington by coach, or on foot from either Skipton or Bolton Priory.

After the Norman Conquest, Grassington was in possession of the Plumptions, from whom it afterwards passed to the Cliffords. There had been some connection between these two families in the marriage of Sir Robert Plumpton to Elizabeth, daughter of Thomas, Lord Clifford, the bride being six years of age at the time of the solemnisation of the ceremony at Skipton Castle, and a widow before she was twelve. At the latter age she was married again, this time to William Plumpton, brother of her first husband. After the Cliffords relinquished possession of the manor and lands of Grassington, they were for a time in the hands of the villagers themselves, but they ultimately disposed of them to the Duke of Devonshire, who now holds them. There was at one time an important market held here, which was very largely attended by farmers and stock-breeders from the surrounding neighbourhood, and there was a yearly fair, the charter for which was granted by Edward I., which was held on the eve, day, and morrow of St. Michael, but this, too, is now but a merry-making. A hundred years ago the merry-making was of a description which would be impossible nowadays. All manner of ancient sports and revelries were indulged in, such as climbing the pole, racing in sacks, sword-dancing, chasing pigs whose tails were soaped, and similar amusements. But the great feature of this annual feast in the old days was the bull-baiting and badger-baiting which was carried on in the market-place, where until recently there was a relic of this barbarous pastime in the shape of the ring to which the bulls were tied. One of the curious characters always in evidence at Grassington feast was Francis King, a fiddler and jester, whose witty sayings and eccentric conduct are still talked of in the village. He owned several fiddles, each of which was distinguished by some feminine name, so that he was occasionally known to remark that Peggy had broken her back, Betsy had been lent to another musician, and Polly had come with him. This curious person was accustomed to travel extensively in Yorkshire, but there were two places which he would never visit, whatever inducements were held out to him. One was York, where he is said to have been whipped as a stroller and vagabond ; the other was Rilston, from whence his family had been ejected. It was no difficult matter for him to keep away from York, but he often had engagements in the neighbourhood of Rilston, and rather than pass through it would climb the fells and pursue his journey by a more circuitous route. If unavoidable circumstances absolutely obliged him to set foot within the boundaries of the hated parish, he used to get out of them as quickly as possible, and manifest his dislike of the place by casting the dust from his shoes over his shoulder in its direction.

There are many old-world associations and memories clustering about

Grassington, and modernised as the place has become it still boasts inhabitants who have not entirely forgotten the old customs. The merry-makings in this district in the olden days were many and curious, and the people had a rare idea of amusing themselves. One of their great recreations was called clock-dressing, which took the form of a carnival gathering, at which people assembled to dress the clock. Stang-riding—a similar custom to the skimmington-riding of other parts of the country—was one of the



principal customs here, but a cart was used instead of a pole, and there does not seem to have been any burning of an effigy, as was the rule in most Yorkshire villages. There was a curious funeral ceremony here which appears to have been peculiar to the place, or at any rate to this part of Wharfedale:—On the day of the interment, all being in readiness, the coffin was carried out of the house and deposited on chairs or trestles before the door, the mourners and friends assembling around it. Some principal person then announced a hymn, reciting the first verse. This was then sung in slow and solemn fashion, and at the end of its last line the coffin was lifted and a procession formed, the concluding verses of the hymn being sung at intervals on the way to the graveyard. Here, too, it was the custom for all persons meeting a funeral to pause and uncover, remaining in this attitude until the dead and its attendants had passed.

The great amusement of the Grassington folk about the beginning of the present century was play-acting. Their theatre, the arrangement and decoration of which was carried out by themselves, was a barn, and the



manager was one Thomas Airey, common carrier between Grassington and Skipton, who appears to have been one of the most eccentric and delightful persons ever heard of. There were only two parts of the house—a pit and a gallery. When the great folk of the neighbourhood deigned to honour the play with their presence, a box was improvised by railing off a part of the pit, and covering the railings with brown paper, painted to represent drapery. Six halfpenny candles lighted the stage, and the scenery was remarkable for its adaptability. Yet on the stage and amidst these rustic surroundings there were playing, about 1807, two afterwards famous people in the persons of Edmund Kean and Harriet Mellon, who, later in life, became Duchess of St. Albans. Neither Kean (who at that time was known by his real name of Carey, or Carter) nor Miss Mellon were then famous. They were members of a strolling company, managed by a man named Goldsmith, which, after performing at Skipton, came on to Grassington and played in the theatre there, frequently assisted by the local actors, and notably by Thomas Airey. This company seems to have remained some time at Grassington, for there are records of a split taking place amongst its members and of Airey forming a company of his own, which included Edmund Kean, Harriet Mellon, Elizabeth Rodwell, Bill Cliff, a poet from Skipton, Jack Soloman, a local besom-maker, and several other folk of the village and neighbourhood. The great attraction appears to have been drama of a tragic and romantic nature, and it seems highly probable that the chief enjoyment of the performance came from the success of the actors in turning tragedy into comedy. A contemporary writer says of Airey and his actors that their pronunciation was barbarous and their performances made ridiculous by the fact that whenever they came upon a hard word they applied to the local schoolmaster for its correct pronunciation, and he, being something of a wag, invariably misled them, with the most ludicrous results. According to a statement in Hone's "Table Book," they called Africa, *Afryka*; pomp, *pump*; pageantry, *paggyantry*; and fatigued, *fattygewed*. On one occasion Airey discovered a stage direction which ran: "They sit down and play a game of *piquet*." Not understanding this, he asked the schoolmaster to explain it to him, and was informed by that worthy that *piquet* was the French equivalent of the words *pie cut*, and that he must bring a pie upon the stage and cut it in pieces, which was accordingly done. The same writer describes seeing the village lawyer, doctor, and parson seated together at the theatre laughing heartily at Airey as he strutted about the stage in the character of Lady Randolph, his clogs showing beneath a gown which was also too attenuated to conceal his corduroy breeches. In after years, Airey became postmaster of Grassington, and was much respected in the village. He died in 1842, and was buried in the churchyard of Linton.

The immediate surroundings of Grassington are full of charm and interest. On the moorland outside the village there are traces of an ancient

encampment which must have covered a considerable area of ground, and in which numerous prehistoric remains, including flints, bones, urns, and a fragment of a Roman pillar have been discovered from time to time. Hereabouts the earth is richly stored with lead, and there is a reasonable presumption that the Romans had lead mines near the village about the end



of the first century. Near this encampment are the remains of a circle of stones known locally as the Druid's Circle, but there is little information to be had concerning them. In the Grass Woods there are some traces of a British fort, which were discovered only a few years ago. The scenery in the Grass Woods is delightful, and the views from the eminences known as Dew Bottom Scar and Dibb Scar are wide and full of charm. Around these woods and their romantic nooks and corners there hangs the memory of a tragedy which took place in them a century ago, when Dr. Petty of Grassington was murdered by a notorious local neer-do-weel named Tom Lee. The murderer hid his victim's body first in Dibb Scar Glen, amongst the rocks; then in a peat-bog on the moors; and finally in the Wharfe near Burnsall. He was ultimately suspected, arrested, tried, and found guilty, and his body hung in chains from one of the trees at the spot in the Grass Woods where the murder was committed, and which is still known to the local population as Dark Corner.



KILNSEY CRAG

## IV

A little distance from Grassington on the way northward, the Wharfe sweeps into a valley bounded on both sides by hills of considerable altitude. The river at this point of its career is materially narrower than in the Bolton district, but the scenery on each bank is much wilder than at any previous part of the Wharfe. The highroad from Threshfield to Kettlewell commands some excellent views of the valley hereabouts and of the hills and mountains to the north-west. It leads, a few miles from Threshfield, to Kilnsey Crag, a huge mass of limestone rock, about 1200 feet in length, and in some places 170 feet in height, with the village of Kilnsey lying at its foot. This place has for centuries enjoyed a reputation as a halting-place for refreshments, and was used for that purpose by the Cliffords when they journeyed into the north of Yorkshire from Skipton Castle. It had also a reputation—like many other villages in this part of Wharfedale—for witches and spells, and one of the last of the wise women was living in it as lately as 1820. This was a person named Nancy Winter, locally famous as Kilnsey Nan. She lived in a corner of the manor-house at Kilnsey, once in pos-

session of the monks of Fountains Abbey as a farmstead or granary, and had a great reputation as a fortune-teller. She practised divination by the crystal, and always carried a live guinea-pig in her bosom. She travelled a good deal in the surrounding districts, and at one time had a shop at Skipton where she attended to sell charms and tell fortunes. There was another wise woman in Littondale, not far from Kilnsey, of whom an account is given in Hone's "Table Book." Her name was Bertha, and she was a disciple of Merlin, Nostradamus, and Michael Scott, and had their pictures in her house, and if she did half as many wonderful things as those she is credited with, she must have been one of the most marvellous witches that ever lived.

From the summit of Kilnsey Crag there is a magnificent prospect of the surrounding country, and especially of the junction of the Skirfare and the Wharfe a little distance to the northward. When the annual feast is celebrated at Kilnsey there is usually a race to the head of the crag, which, if not so long and fatiguing as the guides' race at Grasmere, is a severe test of endurance. About a mile and a half away from Kilnsey, in a range of limestone conterminous with the Crag, there is a curious cavern known as Dowka Bottom Cave, which is well worthy the attention of travellers. It is situate over 1000 feet above sea-level, and in it at various times have been discovered some very remarkable relics of past ages. From the entrance descent is made into the cavern by a ladder, on reaching the foot of which a vast circular cavity 60 feet in height is seen. From this a series of narrow passages, about 200 yards in length, extends into the hillside. The walls of these passages are composed of some petrified substance, snow-white in colour. The remains of pottery, Roman coins, bones of animals which have been long extinct in England, and the complete skeletons of a child and of several adults have been discovered in this cave since it was first opened out; but the most curious thing in connection with it is that about forty years ago there was unearthed, from beneath stalagmite formed by water dripping from the limestones, a perfect specimen of a basalt adze of the type discovered in New Zealand.

The valley of the Skirfare, one of the most charming tributaries of the Wharfe, is locally known as Littondale, and possesses many features of interest. Hawkswick, the first village along it, is a romantically situated place, but the chief glories of the valley are found at Arncliffe—the Cliff of the Eagle—which lies in its very midst, literally surrounded by mountains. From the summit of Fountains Fell, nearly 2200 feet above sea-level, there is a fine view of the neighbouring hills and of the high ground beyond the Lancashire border. Arncliffe is one of the prettiest villages in Wharfedale, and has a history going back to Celtic times. Its church, which was restored and decorated in 1841, stands on the site of the original Norman church, some remains of which are preserved in the garden of the parsonage.



ARNCLIFFE

There is a list of rectors here which commences with the name of Adam Decanus 1180. From the top of the Eagle's Rock there is a splendid view of the village and its surroundings. Arncliffe is one of the few villages which possesses a green. The houses here are quaint and picturesque, and the bridge which crosses the Skirfare is an ancient, solid-looking structure which seems to indicate that there are times when the floods come down from the mountains in irresistible force. Near the source of the Skirfare, on the slopes of Penyghent, there are a number of burrows, or tumuli, known as the Giant's Graves, and close by is one of the highest villages in England, Halton Gill, which looks down on Littondale from an elevation of considerably over 1000 feet.

From Arncliffe there is a mountain path over the southern slope of Birks Fell which leads to Kettlewell, once a market-town of some importance, but now a quiet and sleepy place with a population no larger than those of many hamlets. It was at one time famous for its fairs, which were attended by large numbers of people from the northern dales, but these have now fallen into desuetude, and as the place is nearly twenty miles from a railway station, it has little trade. Here, in 1821, was demolished the ancient Norman church of St. Mary, a few remains of which are preserved in the tower of the modern church. The chief object of interest in Kettlewell is undoubtedly the original Norman font of the old church, which was fortunately preserved, and is still in use.



Hettlewell

It is mounted on four pilasters, and is of such dimensions that baptism by immersion is possible in it. The font is circular and perpendicular, and is ornamented at the capitals of three of the pilasters by boars'



*Buckden*

heads, the badge of the Percys, to whom Kettlewell is supposed to have belonged about the eleventh or twelfth century. There is a curious inscription on one of the tombstones in the churchyard here which is worthy of notice:—

## CAMDEN'S DESCRIPTION OF THE WHARFE 201

Here lyeth the body of Helen Motley, late wife of Henry Motley, Minr. of this church, daughter to Thomas Crosthwaite, rector of Spennithorne, and grand-daughter to Marmaduke Wyvill, of Burton Constable, Knight and Baronet, who died 17th, and was buried 20th of June, 1625, anno ætatis 49. From 49 it was decreed A jubilee should then succeed. Posuit amoris ergo dolens maritus. H.M.

From Kettlewell the Wharfe winds into a lonely and sparsely-populated region, and the traveller begins to recognise the force of Camden's descrip-



tion of it and its surroundings—"He runneth with a swifte and speedy streame, making a great noise as he goeth, as if he were froward, stubborne, and angry; and is made more fell and hearty with a number of stonies lying in his chanell, which he rolleth and tumbleth before him in such sort that it is a wonder to see the manner of it, but especially when hee swelleth high in winter. And verily it is a troublesome river and dangerous even in summer time also which I myself had experience of, not without some perill of mine own, when I first travailed over this country." But wild as the surroundings of the Wharfe are, and tumultuous as its course is near the scene of its birth, there are many places and matters in the dales around it which are full of beauty and interest. A little way beyond Kettlewell, going northward, is a great cavern named Douk Cave, which has been explored for more than a mile under Great Whernside, and through which flows a



stream that culminates in a waterfall. At Starbotton, a mile or two further along the river, there are some picturesque old houses which were probably standing when the flood of 1686 nearly swept the village and its neighbour of Kettlewell out of existence. Round about Buckden and in Buckden itself, there are numerous bits and glimpses which appeal to the lover of the picturesque, and at Hubberholme, at the entrance to the final stretches of the river, there is a church of singularly interesting architecture. It dates from the thirteenth century, when it probably replaced a Saxon edifice. In it there is a very fine oak rood-loft, built in 1558, and a septangular font of the fourteenth century. Here at one time officiated an old-fashioned parson named Thomas Lindley, who also held the living of Halton Gill, and who used to walk six miles, including a climb of over 1900 feet, every Sunday, in order to perform the services at Hubberholme. It was near here, on the slopes of Cam Fell, that Hutton, Archbishop of York (1595-1606), once knelt down to pray, on the very spot where, when he was a poor lad, travelling across these hills in search of his fortune, he had set up a cow from her rest in order that he might derive some comfort from the warmth she had left in the heather.

## CHAPTER XXXV

### The Lower Nidd and its Surroundings

CHARACTER AND COURSE OF THE RIVER NIDD—THE LOWER NIDD—KIRK HAMMERTON—CATTAL MAGNA AND ITS ROMAN ANTIQUITIES—HUN-SINGORE—WALSHFORD—A STRETCH OF THE GREAT NORTH ROAD—ALLERTON MAULEVERER—COWTHORPE AND ITS OAK—KIRK DEIGHTON AND NORTH DEIGHTON—SPOFFORTH AND ITS CASTLE—SPOFFORTH CHURCH—PLUMPTON—RIBSTON AND THE KNIGHTS-TEMPLARS—ORIGIN OF THE RIBSTON PIPPIN—GOLDSBOROUGH AND THE CRUSADERS.



THE river Nidd, which runs a course of fifty-five miles from its source on the eastern slopes of Great Whernside to its junction with the Ouse at Nun Monkton, is one of the most remarkable rivers in Yorkshire, so far as concerns the extraordinary variety of the scenery which encloses it. At some points of its career the Nidd is surrounded by the wildest of scenes: at others, by the tamest; all along its banks the traveller finds a constantly changing panorama of mountain, valley, rock, wood, and meadowland. Round about the scene of its birth, there is a wilderness of moor, mountain, and fell, with solitudes as great as those which surround the source of the Wharfe. From the slopes of Black Fell to Pateley Bridge, the valley of the Nidd has one aspect; from Pateley Bridge to Knaresborough another; from Knaresborough to Nun Monkton, a third. It is at first wild, lonely, and rocky as a Swiss valley; in its second stage it assumes a romantic and fairylike character; in its third it winds through a land as level as that intersected by the Ouse, and partakes very largely of the somewhat sluggish nature of the greater river. In travelling along its banks, then, the explorer passes with little delay from one aspect to another, and is never wearied by a continual succession of the same species of scene. Nor are the associations which cling around it less remarkable for variety and interest than the continually changing character of its course and surroundings. Here and there along its banks are towns, villages, or houses, of note in history, associated with the names of great men, or the story of stirring deeds, or with the doings of some eccentric personage

whose oddities made him famous, or of some hero of romance whose fame sprang chiefly from his crimes. At Ribston the traveller hears of the Knights Templars and their deeds of piety and charity; at Spofforth he sees the grave of Blind Jack, the sightless man who made roads and highways; at Knaresborough he is surrounded by associations of the dark and romantic figure of Eugene Aram. Natural curiosities, again, abound along the banks of the Nidd. No other river in Yorkshire, or indeed in England, can boast the possession of such curious phenomena as the rocks at Brimham and the dropping-well at Knaresborough, or the remarkable strata at Plumpton. Thus a journey along its banks is chiefly characterised by variety, and is rendered doubly interesting by the fact that so much of that variety, with its romance, its poetry, and its association, is compressed within comparatively small limits. The entire valley of the Nidd is full of charm at any period of the year, but an exploration of it during the first weeks of summer, or when the autumn tints are in their full glory, is a delight which every lover of the beautiful will appreciate to the full.

## I

The immediate environments of the meeting of the Nidd with the Ouse are as flat and uneventful, in the matter of remarkable or conspicuous objects in the surrounding scenery, as those which characterise the junction of every Yorkshire river with the great central waterway of the county. On either side the banks of each river the land lies in long, level lines, rich enough in fertility and in flocks and herds, but with little to relieve its plain-like character. Yet the interest of the Nidd begins at once, from the point where the traveller turns along its sedge-lined banks towards the more romantic stretches going westward. The first two villages which he meets, Nun Monkton and Moor Monkton, belong rather to the Ouse than to the Nidd, and the land lying around Marston Moor has more affinity with the belongings of the greater than with those of the lesser river. But no appreciable distance has been traversed from Ouse-side along the Nidd ere historical associations are encountered. At a little distance from Nun Monkton, and lying between that village and the site of the battle of Marston Moor, is Skip Bridge, a structure which carries the highroad from York to Boroughbridge and the north over the river. From this point there used to run—presumably along the line of the present highway—a pavement or causeway which connected the country hereabouts with York. Leland speaks of seeing it when he was in the neighbourhood, and observes of it that it was built by one Blake, who was twice Mayor of York, and had no less than nineteen arches or bridges in its length between that city and Skip Bridge, which arches were for carrying it over the small streams and rivulets draining the surrounding moorland. At the inn at Skip Bridge, one of the most remarkable of the old election-expenses bills was run up

during the celebrated contest between William Wilberforce, Viscount Milton, and the Honourable H. Lascelles in 1807. Although the hostelry stands in a comparatively lonely position, the landlord's account showed that the free and independent electors who had regaled themselves there at the expense of their candidate, had consumed food and drink to the value of over £2300, of which £1389, 4s. was for wines alone, and £59, 18s. for bread.



KIRK HAMMERTON

Kirk Hammerton, a village lying on the north bank of the Nidd, and connected with the York and Boroughbridge highway by a byroad, is one of the most interesting places along the lower stretches of the river, because of its picturesque situation and its ancient church. A little distance away lies its sister village of Green Hammerton, which boasts a fine green approached by an avenue of elms. Both these places are mentioned in the records of the Domesday Survey. Green Hammerton was then waste, but there was land for several ploughs at Kirk Hammerton, and there was also a mill, a fishery, and a church and priest. According to some authorities, this church, which has been so admirably repaired that its ancient appearance is exactly preserved, is of Saxon date so far as its chancel, nave, and tower are concerned, but others contend that it is the work of a period almost immediately succeeding the Norman Conquest. It stands on a slight eminence, which is apparently artificial, but there is nothing to show why any eminence should have been made here. The appearance of the church is particularly striking and interesting. In a report prepared for the Society of Antiquaries in 1890 by Mr. St. John Hope, the latter spoke of the south side of the structure as consisting entirely of original Saxon work, and pointed out other portions which are of the same period. The late Sir Gilbert Scott questioned the existence of any Saxon work at all in the

church, which he attributed to the early twelfth century. In 1891 the church was restored, and during the excavations under the south wall, some proof of its Saxon origin was thought to be discovered in the finding of portions of a bone bracelet, formed of small rings, which had presumably been part of a personal ornament of some chieftain or man of consequence who had been interred there. Whether the original structure was of Saxon or Norman work, its present appearance is remarkable and almost unique; the undressed stone-work of the tower, the high walls of the nave and chancel, and the general air of antiquity, which restoration has done nothing to impair, giving the edifice a peculiar character and interest.

An even greater antiquity than that attaching to the church of Kirk Hammerton hangs about the little hamlet and bridge of Cattal Magna, a little distance away on the road leading to Hunsingore. Here, almost on the very spot where a railway station now stands, there was a Roman guard-house, from which observation was kept on the ford at which the great Roman road from Calcaria (Tadcaster) to Isurium (Aldborough) crossed the Nidd. The road hereabouts is still called the Street, and there are records of a ford across the river existing at this point from Norman days. Numerous relics of the Civil War, in the shape of weapons, have been unearthed here at various times, and there have also been discovered fragments of iron which are attributed to a much earlier date. At the time of the Domesday Survey, Cattal was associated with Hunsingore, its larger and more important neighbour. Gospatric the Dane was chief proprietor in them, and that he was in some favour with the Conqueror may be gathered from the fact that when William conducted his fierce reprisals on the northern folk in revenge for their attack on his new works at York, the manors of Hunsingore and Cattal were spared. These lands were subsequently given by the Conqueror to his favourite, Ernegis de Burun, from whom they passed, by failure of the male line, to the Paganel family, who held large possessions in the county. They were subsequently in the hands of Robert de Ros, who conferred large portions of them upon the Knights Templars of Ribston, close by. The original church of Hunsingore was a Norman foundation, and was an appurtenance of the same religious order. There are some very early entries concerning its thirteenth and fourteenth century vicars in the registers of the Archdeaconry of Richmond, from which it would appear that they were appointed by the Prior of the order of St. John of Jerusalem for the time being. The parish registers of Hunsingore commence in 1626, and contain some very curious entries. There must have been in this parish at some time a conveyance specially used for carrying the infirm from one point to another, judging by the following extracts:—

“ 1729.—A stranger was brought to Walshforth by the Cripple-Cart.”

“ 1741.—A female child came in the Cripple-cart, dyd at Walshforth.”



HUNSINGORE

A very remarkable occurrence in connection with Hunsingore church is recorded in the Sessions Rolls of the West Riding, 1597-98 :—

“Fforasmuch as it is manifestlie proved to this Court (the court then sitting in sessions at Wetherby) that Ffrancis Thompson and George Allen of Hunsingore did in a most contemptuous manner bring into Hunsingore Church a Toie called the Flower of the Well in the tyme of divine service, wherebie the Vicar was disturbed in saieing the said service. It is therefore ordered that the said Francis and George shall be presently stripped naked from the middle upward and whipped throwe this town of Wetherby for their said offence.”

The toy here referred to was in all probability an image which had been used at one of the old well-deckings, in celebrating which it was usual to construct an effigy of the saint to whom the well was dedicated, and to trick it out with gew-gaws and flowers and carry it in procession. The old church of Hunsingore, in which this curious instance of sacrilege took place, was pulled down about thirty years ago, and the present modern edifice erected close by. The previous church had been restored about 1750 by Sir Henry Goodricke, the head of a family which had a long connection with the village ; the new one was built at the sole charge of Joseph Dent, head of the family of Dent, of Ribston. In the new church there are several ancient memorials of various members of the Goodrickses,

amongst them being one which bears the initials of Sir John Goodricke, who was a zealous adherent of Charles I. during the Civil War. It was during his occupancy of the estates, and in consequence of his opposition to the Parliamentary leaders, that the ancient hall or manor-house of Hunsingore was reduced to ruins.

At a little distance from Hunsingore, there is an interesting place in Walshford Bridge, over which the Great North Road passes on its way from Wetherby to Boroughbridge. There are records of a bridge existing at this point six centuries ago, and from various stray historical data and memoranda, it would appear that the highway at this particular point has always been distinguished for its bustle and activity. There was a weekly market at Walshford in the thirteenth century, and an annual fair which lasted four days. Here, too, there was a chapel in mediæval times, which probably stood on, or closely adjacent to, the bridge. At the time of the Dissolution of Religious Houses, this chapel became the property of the Dukes of Suffolk, who subsequently sold it to the Goodrickes, one William Thyckpenny being tenant at the time, though for what purpose he made use of it is not clear. Probably the busiest days of Walshford were those in which all the principal traffic of the kingdom was on the great highroads, and the wayside villages were for ever re-echoing to the clatter and rattle of coaches, post-chaises, and drovers' carts. The stretch of the Great North Road which runs to the northward from Walshford Bridge is particularly interesting, running straight on through a luxuriant and fertile district, enclosed by the parks of Ribston and Goldsborough on one side and that of Allerton on the other. There are various features of this stretch of the road which recall the old days. The traveller will observe that the highway is usually much wider where it approaches a village, and that on each side of it there are considerable expanses of turf which in these days seem to answer no useful purpose. The reason of this apparent waste of land is that in the old days vast droves of live stock were brought along the roads and picketed at night in the neighbourhood of a village. The Great North Road was used a great deal by cattle-drovers, and there was scarcely a day which did not witness vast bodies of cattle and sheep being driven along its wide stretches. Naturally, there was at that time much need of the wayside inns, and where there is now one roadside hostelry there used to be several. There was a noted house at this stretch of the road, called Nineveh, where the drovers invariably halted, but it is now no longer in existence, and there was another at a point close to the present railway station of Allerton Mauleverer, which was famous for the opportunities it afforded its customers to witness an exhibition of cock-fighting.

Allerton Mauleverer, which lies a mile or two from Walshford, along the Great North Road, is chiefly remarkable because of its associations with two great families. From the time of the Norman settlement until 1720,



its manor was in possession of the Mauleverer family, upon one of whom, William Mauleverer, it had been conferred by the Conqueror in recognition of his services. Sir Richard Mauleverer, who died in 1720, was the last male of his line, but the estates continued in the female line until 1786, when they were sold to the Duke of York—Frederick Augustus, second son of George III.—who resided here for some time, during which he re-built the house, erected the stabling, and laid out the pleasure-grounds. In 1805 the estate was sold to the sixteenth Baron Stourton, and in 1851-52 the eighteenth Baron had the house taken down and used the materials in constructing a new mansion, now known as Allerton Park. The founder of this ancient family was one Botolph Stourton, brother-in-law of Harold Godwinsson, with whom he took the field against William at the battle of Senlac. In the church of Allerton Mauleverer, which was built about the twelfth century by Richard Mauleverer, and rebuilt after the Norman style in 1745, there are some exceedingly fine effigies and an ancient brass, all in memory of members of the family from whence the village takes its name. The effigies are in wood and represent knights-crusaders. One of them, which is much worn, is vested in ring armour, with a hood and surcoat; the other in chain-mail, with surcoat and bascinet, pointed. The ancient brass depicts Sir John Mauleverer and his wife, and has an inscription which reads as follows:—

*Hic jacet Dns. Johannes Mauleverer, Miles, et Elianora, consors  
ejus, filia Dni Petri de Midelton, Militis. Qui Johannes obiit  
xxx die Nov. ano. Dni. M.C.C.C., quorum animabus, etc.*

## II

On the south side of the Nidd, and a little way across the river from Hunsingore, lies the village of Cowthorpe, a place interesting in itself because of its antiquity and picturesque situation, but chiefly famous for its giant oak, which has attracted the notice and excited the wonder of travellers and sightseers for many generations. It is commonly said that this remarkable tree is 1600 years old, and that it has a marvellous antiquity cannot be questioned. It is situated in a meadow which slopes towards the river, and springs from a deep, rich loam with a clay subsoil. Undoubtedly the most gigantic tree in this country, it is somewhat remarkable that no mention is made of it in Evelyn's "Sylva." Various accounts of it have been published during the past century, and measurements have been taken at intervals, some of which were very precise and elaborate. A very full description of it was published in 1842 by Mr. Empson, who then estimated that it contained 73 tons of timber, was 1600 years old, and had a circumference close to the ground of 60 feet, and 8½ feet from the ground of 34 feet 6 inches. He gave its height, including the decayed wood, as 43 feet, and



the length of its principal branch as 50 feet 6 inches; the diameter of the internal hollow as 11 feet close to the ground, and 7 feet, 12 feet above ground. Later measurements, very carefully taken, show some variations on these figures, and recent experts in arboriculture seem inclined to the opinion that the tree is in all probability not more than 800 years old. It has decayed considerably since 1768, but it still yields acorns. It is said that at one time the maids from the neighbouring farm used to milk the cows under this gigantic tree, and that twenty-four animals could easily be ranged side by side for this purpose around its mighty trunk. That it must in past days have formed an even more striking object than it does now is certain. When it was in its full strength and glory it and the ancient village lying close by must have formed a peculiarly English picture. Cowthorpe has a history which goes back beyond the Conquest. It was in full tilling at the time of the Domesday Survey, and had a church and presumably a priest. The present church was built during the reign of Henry VI. by Sir Brian Roucliff, head of a family whose name constantly occurs in the registers and on the memorials of the parish, and contains many remarkable monuments and antiquities.

There is another ancient church which possesses many features of interest at Kirk Deighton, a small village lying between Cowthorpe and Wetherby, on the highroad from the latter place to Knaresborough. Kirk Deighton and its sister hamlet of North Deighton belonged at the time of the Domesday Survey to Ralph Paganel, and had formerly been in possession of Merlesweyn. There was a church there at that time, and some traces of its Saxon architecture are still to be seen in the north wall of the present edifice. Ralph Paganel sublet Deighton to the Trussebut family, one of whom, William Trussebut, is supposed to have built a new church, using the remains of the old one, about the beginning of the twelfth century. There are numerous interesting monuments in this church, and amongst them one in memory of Ursula, wife of George Walker, Archdeacon of Derry, and mother of the famous George Walker who defended Londonderry against James II. and was subsequently killed at the battle of the Boyne in 1690. One of the earliest rectors of Kirk Deighton was Thomas de Cantilupe, afterwards Bishop of Hereford and Chancellor of England, who was presented to the living in 1247. He had a great reputation for sanctity, and was canonised in 1320, being the last Englishman to receive the full honours of the process of beatification from the Papal See.

There are few villages and hamlets in this district which are not full of historical association, and few again which are so rich in it as Spofforth, the ancient seat of the powerful Percy barons, who kept their state here, in the very heart of Yorkshire, ere they finally settled down at Alnwick as Dukes of Northumberland. The old castle of Spofforth, which lies about two miles across country from Kirk Deighton, has long been a mere heap of ruins, and the once busy market-town close by is now but a village, but

there are still many memorials of the past about them. When the Domesday Survey was made William the Conqueror gave to William de Percy, one of his staunchest henchmen, no less than eighty-six lordships in Yorkshire, of which Spofforth was one, and at Spofforth the family settled down, probably constructing their stronghold on the spot where an ancient Saxon fortification had stood. In the year (1309) in which Henry Percy bought Alnwick from Anthony Bek, the fighting Bishop of Durham, he obtained royal licence to rebuild his castle of Spofforth, which would seem good evidence that he had no notion of abandoning his Yorkshire residence. His successor, Henry Percy, first Earl of Northumberland, roused an insurrection against Henry IV. in these parts in 1407, and was vanquished and slain at Bramham Moor, his estates being at once forfeited from his successors to the crown; Spofforth, by a grim but not unnatural irony of fate, passing into the hands of his conqueror, Sir Thomas Rokeby. The estates, however, soon came back into possession of the Percys, only to be lost again after the fight at Towton, in which sanguinary affair the Earl of Northumberland and his brother, Richard Percy, were slain, the Yorkists afterwards devastating their lands and houses out of pure revenge. Spofforth Castle, however, was repaired by the Percys about 1559, and as late as the beginning of the seventeenth century was occupied by their steward, Sir Sampson Ingilby, who was certainly in residence here in 1600. There are no very definite records of its subsequent history, but it was probably destroyed during the Civil War, and since then has been given over to the processes of decay. According to Grainge, it never was anything more than a manor-house—there are no traces of moat, outworks, or the other defences proper to a fortress, yet certain preparations for any necessary resistance are still to be seen in the formidable walls and narrow-slitted loopholes. The form of the castle is that of a parallelogram, with a square projection at the north end and an octagonal turret at the north-west corner. In the lower storey of the square projection is a species of dungeon with a vaulted roof, entered by an aperture on the south, 4 feet square. In the north-east corner of this chamber is another opening, the character of which it is difficult to determine: the windows were loopholes, 6 inches wide and 3 feet high. The north front has loopholes in the lower storey, and is 23 yards in length. The west front is 49 yards in length and is flanked by 6 buttresses. Both fronts are divided by mouldings into two storeys; the west has numerous loopholes in the lower storey, but in the higher there are two windows of two lights each, with some fine carving in their cornices, and four others, larger, but of inferior design and workmanship. These windows lighted the great hall, a very fine apartment, 75 feet in length by 36 in width, the flooring of which was half on the rock on which most of the castle is built and half on an erection beneath it. The same authority considers that when the castle was complete it was not of sufficient dimensions to accommodate a retinue such as

that which the Percys gathered about them ; but whatever may have been the nature of the establishment which they kept up there, it is certain that Spofforth was their principal seat for many generations, and there is good ground for believing that the most picturesque figure of them all, the impetuous Harry Hotspur, was born within the walls which are not yet crumbled into dust.

There is a tradition that the church of Spofforth owes its origin to Harry Hotspur, but though there is no mention of it in the records of the Domesday Survey, there can be little doubt that the present edifice, which has been entirely rebuilt during the present century, has a history going back to Norman times. There may have been a Saxon church here, for Saxon fragments have been found at one time or another—that there was a Norman one of some period is certain from the ancient remains of architecture of that style. The list of rectors begins with the name of H. de Evesham, Dec. 13, 1280, and includes those of Laurence Eusden, 1681 (father of the Poet-Laureate of the same name, who was baptized in the church in 1688) and Matthew Hutton, 1729, who was successively Canon of Windsor, Bishop of Bangor, and Archbishop of York. There are some curious entries in the registers, and remarkable monuments and effigies in the church. In the north wall of the choir, in a cusped niche, is an effigy in stone of John de Plumpton, a knight of the Order of the Red Cross of Malta, in the fourteenth century ; in the churchyard is a stone erected by Lord Dundas in memory of John Metcalfe, the celebrated blind road-maker of Knaresborough, who had one hundred and fourteen descendants of his body surviving him at the time of his death. An epitaph of some note, as illustrating the liking of seventeenth century folk for tombstone rhyming, is to be seen upon the plate of a tomb to William Midelton of Stockeld, who died in 1614:—

“ Learning, worship, credit, and patrimony  
 With wealth, allegiance, wife, and progeny  
 Servants and friends, all this alas had he  
 Yet lyeth now in dust here as you see  
 And so doth thousands more, and so shall yee  
 He doth now follow them that went before  
 And you shall follow him, and others more  
 Shall follow you, small difference in ye matter  
 But that some goe before and some come after.”

One of the curiosities of the valley of the Nidd lies between Spofforth and Harrogate in the shape of the remarkable collection of huge fragments and masses of stone known as Plumpton Rocks, which are situate near the village and park of that name, and are annually visited by large numbers of people. These rocks are of millstone grit and assume the most curious shapes, and some of them are of very considerable proportions. One,

known as the Lover's Leap, is composed of two vast masses parted at the base and forming a wide breach over which it appears possible to spring. There is a local tradition that a lover was once dared by his mistress to make the attempt, and that he lost his life in the endeavour. In the immediate neighbourhood of Plumpton there is another curious gritstone rock, named the Croser Stone, which is nearly 100 feet in circumference and has a cavity which seems to have been produced by artificial means. It is conjectured that the monoliths known as the Devil's Arrows, at Boroughbridge, on the Ure, originally came from Plumpton or its neigh-



*Ribston  
Hall.*

bourhood, where millstone grit abounds. Plumpton was the original seat of the great mediæval family of that name. The Plumptons have commonly been supposed to be of Norman origin, but there is some evidence that they were already seated here when the Conqueror encountered Harold Godwinsson at Senlac. For several centuries after the Conquest this family exercised great power in the land, and were allied by marriage and interest with some of the greatest barons of feudal times. They held their lands of the Percys, and bore the Percy arms on their shields. They were hereditary Master Foresters of the Royal Forest of Knaresborough, Bailiffs of the Burgh of Knaresborough, and Constables of Knaresborough Castle. The last male of this ancient family died in 1749, and the estates are now in possession of the Earls of Harewood. The old house of the Plumptons, which Leland saw in the middle of the sixteenth century and described as a very fair house of stone with two towers, was pulled down about 1760, and no traces of it are now left.

One of the most interesting places along the lower reaches of the Nidd, and also one of the most picturesquely situated, is Ribston, now a modern

mansion, but once the home of the Knights Templars and afterwards of the Knights Hospitallers of the Order of St. John of Jerusalem. The Preceptory of Knights Templars was founded early in the thirteenth century by Robert de Ros, but its members held Ribston for scarcely a hundred years and forfeited their house and lands there under somewhat discreditable circumstances. An official inquiry into their conduct was opened in 1311, and their preceptor, William de Grafton, was deprived of his office and sent to Selby Abbey, presumably in disgrace. After this sad ending of the pious dispositions of Robert de Ros the house and lands of Ribston remained in keeping of the Crown until 1324, when they were conferred on the Knights Hospitallers of St. John of Jerusalem. That the property thus granted was of considerable value is evident from a return made in 1338 by the prior of the Order, from which it appears that the manor-house and garden were worth 14s. 4d.; the dove-cote, 5s.; the land (900 acres of varying value), £28, 15s.; the four water-mills, £7; the meadow-land, £3; the church at Hunsingore, 30 marks; the manor at Wetherby and various properties there, and at Sicklinghall and Whitkirk, 40 marks; certain fees and perquisites, £26; and stock, 10 marks, giving a total rental of £167, 11s. 8d. This Order held Ribston to the time of the Dissolution, when the value appears to have been about £250. The house and lands ultimately came into possession of the Goodricke family, whose members held them until 1836, when they passed by purchase to the family of Dent, which sprang from the small market-town of that name in the North-West Riding. There is little to indicate the nature of the buildings wherein the Knights Hospitallers were lodged. The ancient hall was rebuilt by one of the Goodrickes in 1674, and the modern mansion thus originated has at various times been improved and altered by the present holders of the estates. It has a very fine situation on the banks of the Nidd, which at this point curves sufficiently to form a south and west boundary to the park. There are here some good specimens of the work of certain Italian painters and an interesting collection of ancient papers and documents. The chapel at the side of the house contains various monuments of some note, and until the middle of the present century there was preserved in the chapel yard a Roman relic in the shape of a sepulchral stone on which was carved the effigy of a standard-bearer of the Ninth Legion. This was discovered in York in 1688, and is now preserved in the museum of the Philosophical Society in that city. All round about Ribston Hall and its chapel are magnificent gardens and trees, and the pleasure-grounds are amongst the finest of their class in England. It was here that the famous pippin which bears the name of Ribston was first cultivated in this country. The seed of this finely-flavoured apple was brought by Sir Henry Goodricke from Normandy early in the eighteenth century, and was planted at Ribston, and the results watched with great care. Of the trees thus produced it is said that only one bore fruit, and from

it all the other trees of this variety now flourishing in England have been cultivated.

There are further interesting memorials of mediæval days at Goldsborough, which lies, in close proximity to the Nidd, between Ribston Park and the town of Knaresborough. At the time of the Domesday Survey this place was called Godenesburg, and Merlesweyn had owned it in the Saxon days. After the Conquest it was in possession of Ralph Paganel,



*Goldsborough Hall.*

whose vassal, Hubert, was cultivating it in 1086. It gave a name to the family of Goldsborough, of whom records are extant from the time of Henry II. to their extinction in the male line about the beginning of the seventeenth century. A member of this family, Sir John Goldsborough, was Speaker of the House of Commons in 1380, and another, Edward Goldsborough, was a Baron of the Exchequer in 1488. From the Goldsboroughs the house and lands passed to the Huttons, a branch of the Cumberland family of that name. The purchaser, Sir Richard Hutton, who was a Justice of the Court of Common Pleas, built the present hall early in the seventeenth century, and one of its first uses was to afford accommodation to the Parliamentary troops during the siege of Knaresborough. From the Huttons Goldsborough passed by the female line to the Byerleys, who sold it in 1760 to the Lascelles family, in whose possession it still remains. The house is of imposing and antique appearance,

and is particularly noticeable for its courtyard and gateway. The most interesting object at Goldsborough, however, is the Early English church, which was restored by Sir Gilbert Scott at the expense of the Earl of Harewood some years ago. There are no definite chronicles as to the foundation of the original edifice, but that it was in existence during the thirteenth century appears from the fact that it was valued in Pope Nicholas's Taxation, 1292, at £6, 13s. 4d. It is supposed to have been destroyed by the Scots during one of their numerous marauding expeditions into this part of the country early in the fourteenth century, and to have been rebuilt a little later by one of the Goldsboroughs. This church is chiefly remarkable for its possession of two very fine and perfectly preserved effigies, one on the north, the other on the south side of the choir. Each effigy represents a Crusader in full panoply, and the tombs—of the period of Edward II.—on which each rests are highly decorated. The church also contains an altar-tomb in memory of the thirteen sons and daughters—Richard, Thomas, Edward, John, Peter, George; Jane, Maude, Elizabeth, Nycolas, Inett, Alys, and Anne—of Richard Goldsborough and his wife, who lived during the fifteenth century. There are several other tombs and monuments in the church deserving of attention, and the arches of the south doorway contain some good work of the zig-zag pattern of the early twelfth century. All over the church, in the windows, on the shields of arms outside the tower, and in the ornaments and decorations, there are numerous references to the eminent families who have held the surrounding lands, and notably to that which took its name from the place and became extinct there after long centuries of possession.

## CHAPTER XXXVI

### Knaresborough and its Associations

THE ROMANTIC' SITUATION AND ASPECT OF KNARESBOROUGH—HISTORY AND DESCRIPTION OF THE CASTLE—THE PARISH CHURCH OF ST. JOHN THE BAPTIST AND ITS ANTIQUITIES—ST. ROBERT OF KNARESBOROUGH: HIS CHAPEL AND CAVE—THE STORY OF EUGENE ARAM—KNARESBOROUGH PRIORY—THE DROPPING WELL—MOTHER SHIPTON AND HER PROPHECIES—ROCK DWELLINGS AT KNARESBOROUGH—JOHN METCALFE, THE BLIND ROAD-MAKER—KNARESBOROUGH IN MODERN TIMES.

#### I

**T**O many experienced judges of natural scenery who are familiar with the various Yorkshire towns it is a somewhat difficult task to decide whether Knaresborough or Richmond can claim the honour of possessing the most striking and picturesque situation in the county. In some respects Richmond seems to bear away the palm; in others, Knaresborough so triumphantly asserts herself that it seems impossible to overlook her claims. One matter is certain—Richmond and Knaresborough stand in a class of their own so far as the romantic surroundings and general aspect of Yorkshire towns are concerned. No other towns in the county can compare with them for beauty of situation or for features of interest. There is a similarity between them which the traveller who has seen both cannot fail to notice. Each wears an old-fashioned, quaint aspect; each, save on market-days, enjoys a sleepy, languorous existence; each is a collection of more or less ancient houses grouped about a ruined castle; each stands on the edge of a wooded cliff at the foot of which winds a river whose waters have never been stained or polluted. Each, too, has a history and associations of its own, and each forms a strong connecting link between old-world life and the life of the later nineteenth century, and yet seems to belong to neither period. Like Richmond, Knaresborough is one of those rare places wherein the traveller feels that he would like to spend a summer night out of doors rather than



within four walls. There is nothing of the light and heat in its quaint nooks and corners which men get in the crowded streets and squares of London or Leeds; there is no Bacchanalian throng, even on market nights, when the rustic mind naturally tends to merriment; the place is rather a haunt of peace, ancient enough, and full of suggestion. Within its boundaries there are a hundred retreats where a man might linger and dream on a summer night: a young man with thoughts and fancies of love in his head, here; a greybeard in love with meditation, there; greybeard and youth alike on the bridge which spans the river where the overhanging trees make canopies of shade. There are few spots in Yorkshire or in England more attractive than this bridge—it is one of those places where the short summer night of these latitudes could well be dreamt away to the murmur of the water rippling beneath, the whispering of the wind in the trees, and the thoughts which steal unbidden to the mind in the midst of such surroundings. There is little in the appearance of Knaresborough that can repel the lover of antique things set in fitting framework. Not even the presence of the railway, nor of the great bridge which carries it over the Nidd, can spoil the picture which the town makes. From the banks of the river the houses rise in irregular, serrated terraces, a mass of cool and refreshing colour in which grey points of rock, covered in summer with flowers, and at all seasons with glossy ivy, lift themselves out of a bower of green. Ancient buildings, quaint affairs of grey stone capped by subdued red roofs, occur in this picture at all points, dominated by the remains of the castle, which, if not as formidable in appearance as it was when Leland saw it, is still the most noticeable thing in the town, and its principal landmark. The mere aspects of a scene like this are in themselves sufficient to exercise an inspiring effect upon the imagination; when allied with the historical associations and legendary lore which invariably centres around an ancient town they stir up the mind of even an experienced observer of men and cities to something very like enthusiasm.

In point of antiquity Knaresborough can claim a place in line with those of any other Yorkshire towns or cities which were in existence before the coming of the Romans. There was certainly a Brigantian settlement here at the time when the Brigantian kings ruled their kingdom from Iseur (Aldborough) a few miles away, and there are still traces of the defences which surrounded it. At various times there have been discovered in the town Roman coins minted at an early stage of the first Roman occupation. It was evidently a town of some note and size during Saxon times, and was then strengthened by a fortress of Saxon or Celtic origin, subsequently dismantled by William the Conqueror to make room for his Norman keep. At the time of the Domesday Survey the manor was in private holding of the king. It was then called *Chenaresburg*, and included eleven berewicks. The greater part of its land was returned as waste, and its value was very much less than it had been in the time of Edward the Confessor. It is said to have suffered

severely during the devastation which William carried out in Yorkshire after the attack on his new keep at York, and it was probably soon after this that he gave it to Serlo de Burgh and ordered the building of the first castle. This Serlo de Burgh was Baron of Tonsburgh in Normandy, and is said to have followed William to England in company with his brother John, surnamed Monoculus, who, however, is declared by some authorities to have been his grandson. Serlo de Burgh is commonly held to be the builder of the first castle, but there is little evidence to connect his name with its foundation, though the presumption that the Normans would lose no time in erecting some stronghold here is too strong to be overlooked. There is a record of a payment of £11 in connection with the king's works at Knaresborough in 1130, which seems to indicate that the castle was then in course of construction. When John came there hunting, early in the thirteenth century, whatever castle or fortress he found at Knaresborough must have been in need of repair, for he ordered certain moneys to be expended in restoring it. Previous to this the castle had formed the prison of the four knights who slew Thomas à Becket at Canterbury. They were Sir Thomas Briton, Sir William Tracy, Sir Reginald Fitz-Urse, and Sir Hugh de Morville, the latter being Constable of Knaresborough Castle at the time of their offence. They remained at Knaresborough for a year: strict prisoners, according to some chroniclers; refugees from justice, according to others. There is a local tradition to the effect that so heavy a curse lay upon them that no man dare speak with them, and that the dogs refused to eat the food they cast aside. There is a further legend, gravely narrated by some historians as being a piece of veracious history, that these four knights after their reconciliation to the Church performed a pilgrimage to the Holy Sepulchre, and died in Jerusalem, and were interred together there at the door of the church of the Knights Templars.

During the first few years of the thirteenth century John came to Knaresborough a great deal, in order to enjoy some sport in the neighbouring forest, and there are still extant several records of the feastings and jollities kept up there during his stay. The constable of the castle at that period was Brian de Lisle, who is said to have excavated the moat. Hubert de Burgh was constable in 1229, and was succeeded by Richard, Earl of Cornwall, brother of Henry III., who conferred the castle and forest upon him in 1234. Richard founded a priory here on the banks of the Nidd, but made himself unpopular by his interference with the rights of the people. His son Edmund dying without issue the castle and estates reverted to the Crown, and were in keeping of Miles Stapleton and John de Insula for some time. In 1307 they passed into the hands of Piers de Gaveston, the favourite of Edward II., who made him Earl of Cornwall and gave him Knaresborough and much land in its neighbourhood. It was during Gaveston's possession of the castle and manor that the town was made a free borough, with an annual fair, a weekly market, an assize of bread and



ale, and an exemption from fines and amercements for toll, pontage, murrage, and passage throughout the country. When the barons who agitated against Gaveston's influence over the king took arms they seized Knaresborough Castle and destroyed all the books, documents, and writings found in it. Both castle and town suffered severely from one of the marauding Scottish expeditions in 1319. Meanwhile they had passed out of Gaveston's possession into that of the Crown, and were leased first to John de Wysham for a yearly rental of 800 marks, and second to John de Wanton for the same consideration. They were subsequently conferred upon Philippa, widow of Edward III., who enjoyed them from 1333 to 1369, when she died. In 1371 they were finally settled as part of the Duchy of Lancaster, and have remained so ever since, the queen being now lady of the manor as holder of the lands of the duchy. One of the sons of Geoffrey Chaucer, Thomas, was constable under the duchy during the time that John of Gaunt held it. There are few records relating to it from this time until 1590 (save that Richard II. was imprisoned in it in 1399) when it was thoroughly restored. Leland describes it, as it appeared in his time, in the following words: "The castle standith magnificently and strongly on a Rok, and hath a very deep diche hewing out of the Rok, where it is not defendid with the ryver Nydde, that ther renneth in a deade stony bottom. I nombired a eleven or twelve towers in the woal of the Castle, and one very fayre besides, in the second area there long two other lodgings of stone." In 1616 the castle, honour, and lordships of Knaresborough was granted by James I. to his son Charles—just thirty years later the castle was dismantled by order of the Parliament, whose forces had at last succeeded in reducing it to submission after a most determined resistance on the part of one of Charles's strongest garrisons. The order for its demolition was dated 30th April 1646, and much of the stone of which it had consisted was used in building the houses which now adjoin it.

The area included within the walls of Knaresborough Castle when the entire edifice was in a state of preservation was about two acres and a half. The outer wall was flanked with eleven towers, some trace of several of which may yet be seen. A good part of the principal tower is still standing, and is supposed to have been built during the reign of Edward III. It has three storeys above the dungeon, the first containing guard-room, muniment room, and a third apartment at one time used as a debtor's prison, and the second an ante-chamber and state-room, the latter being a very fine apartment which formerly contained a large window full of elaborate tracery. The third storey was of similar arrangements to the first, and the top of the tower was battlemented. To the dungeon at the base access is given by a flight of twelve stairs. The dungeon walls are 36 feet thick, and are formed of hewn stone. The enclosure within these formidable walls is 23 feet in length and 20 feet in breadth. The roof is arched with stone and supported by a circular

pillar 9 feet in circumference. There is an aperture for admitting air into the dungeon 3 feet square at the inside, but narrowing gradually till it ends in a very small aperture at the outside. The only light which the occupants of this dungeon could procure was through the iron grate in the door at the top of the steps. On the south-east side of the castle there are the remains of a gateway in the Early English style, and the ruins of a chapel unearthed about a hundred years ago, and then found to contain an altar of stone highly decorated, some fragments of painted glass, human bones, and a marble figure of the Virgin and Child. Although there is now comparatively little remaining of the castle as it appeared in its full strength, it is well worthy of a careful inspection on account of its position and the careful way in which its architectural details have been worked out. It occupies a position above the Nidd hardly less commanding than that of Richmond Castle above the Swale, and must have been well-nigh impregnable when it was in a proper state of fortification. Like many other historic ruins it is now a modern show-place and pleasure-ground, and its courtyard has been supplied with trees and lighted by gas-lamps. In the guard-room there are several curiosities and relics of more than usual interest. The most important is an oak chest which used to belong to the family of Slingsby and is said by some folk to have been the property of William the Conqueror. It is very solid and massive, and is strengthened by eleven iron bands, and studded with iron nails. It has no less than seven locks and keys and three lockers, one of which has a false bottom. There is also here a smaller oak chest, which used to hold the records of the Forest of Knaresborough, a Saxon stone coffin in good preservation, some stone carvings, dated 850, which were found in the priory near at hand, pieces of ancient armour belonging to the Slingsbys, a walking-stick once used by Metcalfe, the blind road-maker, a spinning-wheel, once the property of the wife of Daniel Clarke, the victim of Eugene Aram, a number of cannon-balls, one of which weighs thirty-eight pounds, and various other relics of olden days. Not the least interesting feature of the castle and its surroundings, is the vantage-ground which it affords for obtaining some very excellent views of the river and the town, which from this point are seen under their most romantic aspects.

## II

The parish church of Knaresborough occupies a commanding position above the Nidd, and is probably built on the same site as the Saxon church which stood here long before the Conquest and was destroyed by the Danes during one of their marauding expeditions into the heart of Yorkshire. There are no records extant of the rebuilding of the church, but that it was already in existence very soon after the Norman Conquest appears from the fact that in 1114 it was an appurtenance of the prior and monks of Nostell. In

1230 Walter de Gray, Archbishop of York, united it with the Prebend of Beckhill, and there is a record in the register which bears his name of his having subsequently (1233) granted the church to Peter de Rivall, who was to pay ten marks every year to the Prebendary of Beckhill, to whom the church was to revert on the said Peter's demise. During the two centuries immediately following the Conquest there are few records of the church, and it is extremely probable that whatever books and documents it then possessed were destroyed in 1318 when the Scots overspread this district and wrought



wholesale havoc amongst the towns and villages. They set fire to Knaresborough tower and to its church, and marks of the damage done at this time may still be traced upon the walls of the present edifice, which was erected from the materials of the Norman church and re-consecrated in 1343. Of the original building all that is plainly traceable in the later one is the base of the chancel and a part of the vestry. The parish registers here begin in 1561, but they contain no entries of any particular note or significance save that in them is recorded the effects which the plague wrought at various

times in the parish, and that they afford some clue to the increase or decrease of population in the town. The church was completely restored and renovated about thirty years ago, and as it now stands consists of a nave, chancel, north aisle, and tower surmounted by a slender spire of wood. There were at one time three chantries attached to this church, dedicated respectively to St. John, St. Mary Magdalene, and the Blessed Virgin, and they were severally valued at £5, 2s. 4d., £4, 13s. 3d., and £2, 16s. 8d. The church itself was originally dedicated to the Blessed Virgin, but was afterwards placed under the patronage of St. John the Baptist.

On the north side of the chancel of this church is the chapel of the Slingsbys of Scriven, an ancient Yorkshire family which became extinct in the male line in 1869 through the accidental death by drowning of Sir Charles Slingsby, the tenth and last baronet, whose monument, bearing his effigy by Boehm, was placed here after his death by his sister, the last survivor of their race. It is in the form of a magnificent altar-tomb, and bears a very brief inscription. The west window of the church was placed there in memory of Sir Charles Slingsby, and the cost defrayed by public subscription, and the inscription narrates that he lost his life by the upsetting of a ferry-boat on the river Ure, in company with five other persons whose names are also mentioned. Several of the inscriptions on the Slingsby tombs and monuments in this chapel are now quite illegible. In the floor of the chapel is a heavy, black marble slab, measuring six by nearly five feet, which is said to have originally covered the remains of St. Robert, the Knaresborough Hermit, and to have been brought to the church for the purpose of being laid over the grave of Sir Henry Slingsby, one of the most zealous adherents of Charles I., who was beheaded by order of the Parliament in 1658. An inscription upon it reads as follows:—

This stone of St. Robert's was brought here, and under it was laid Henry, son of Henry Slingsby, who being expelled the House of Commons, and all his goods confiscated by Act of Parliament, nothing else remained for him to do but to endeavour to save his soul. He suffered on the 8th day of June, 1658, in the 57th year of his age, on account of his fidelity to his king, and attachment to the laws of his country, being beheaded by order of the tyrant, Cromwell, he was translated to a better place. Sir Thomas Slingsby, Baronet, no degenerate heir of his father's virtues, placed this in the year 1693.

Another notable tomb in this chapel is that of Sir Henry Slingsby, knighted by Elizabeth in 1602, and at one time Vice-President of the Council of the North and High Sheriff of Yorkshire. His monument represents him in his winding-sheet with a cloth bound about his head, while the inscription on a black stone states that—

Here lies Sir Henry Slingsby, Knight, son and heir of Francis and Mary Slingsby, who died December 17, 1634, aged 74.

*Sed Omnia Vanitas.*

A refreshing contrast to the last significant epitaph is found in one which appears on a tombstone in the graveyard outside, to the memory of a worthy Yorkshirewoman who appears to have been a paragon of all the virtues, and to have created a remarkable impression upon her friends and neighbours of Knaresborough :—

SACRED TO THE MEMORY OF THE AGREEABLE AND GOOD

MRS. DOVE,

Whose Life was One Continued Practice of every Christian Virtue, insomuch that any Attempt of describing her Perfections, would really be an Inguery to her Character.

*Died 1759—Aged 99.*

There is another epitaph on a tombstone in this churchyard which is veiled in exceedingly ambiguous language. It is on the grave of a wife whose commemorators seem to have thought her hardly dealt with, if not exactly imposed upon :—

“Farewell, my husband and children dear,  
I’ve done for you for many a year,  
I have always provided for the best,  
But now I am gone to take my rest.”

It is impossible to avoid wondering whether these lines were the result of a strong sense of humour on the part of their writer, or whether they were meant as a direct hint to the husband and offspring that the deceased had had a hard time of it during her experience as wife and matron. That adulatory notices and fulsome epitaphs are by no means necessary for the proclamation of a really great man’s fame is a theory put forward on another tombstone in this churchyard :—

“Praises on tombstones are trifles vainly spent,  
A man’s own name is his best monument.”

There are several tombs and monuments within and without the parish church of Knaresborough which are worthy of notice. Near the porch is the grave of Hargrove, the author of a History of Knaresborough, who is reported to have been one of the most painstaking topographers and antiquaries of his time, and to have filled no less than thirteen large quarto volumes of manuscript with notes relating to the history of his county. He was born at Halifax in 1741, and died at Knaresborough in 1818. Near the church there used to stand an ancient rectory which was last tenanted about a hundred years ago. It was a quaint old place of lath and plaster, and has now been pulled down for many years. Close by is the house in which dwelt the blind road-maker, John Metcalfe, and near at hand was the ancient Free Grammar School, founded in 1617 by the executors of Robert Chaloner, a native of Goldsborough, who went into the Church, and became rector of Amersham in Buckinghamshire. In close proximity to the church, too, stood the parson’s tithe-barn, where all the offerings and dues in kind were stored, but this, like the old rectory, was dismantled some time ago.



## III

One of the most remarkable of the many very remarkable persons connected with Knaresborough was Robert Flower, known to the faithful as St. Robert, whose chapel, situate at the foot of a limestone precipice overhanging the north bank of the Nidd, is still visited by large numbers of people. St. Robert was the son of Robert, or, as some writers call him, Tooke, Flower, mayor of York in the reign of Richard I., and was remarkable for his love of sanctity even from his childhood. The particulars of his early history are not very clear, and there seems no doubt that much of his story is legendary, but sufficient records have been left of him to explain his connection with Knaresborough. He is said to have been a monk of Whitby and then of Fountains, and it is also claimed for him that he was made first Abbot of Newminster, in Northumberland. Leland seems to have formed an opinion that he had many allurements to remain in the world, for he speaks of him as "forsaking the Landes and Goodes of his father, to whom he was heir as eldest sonne, and desiring a solitary lyffe as an heremite resorted to the rokkes by the river of Nidde," but some other writers speak of the saint as if he had never been used to anything but seclusion and hard living from his boyhood. There is no accurate information extant as to when he came to Knaresborough, or if the cell there was a temporary or permanent abode. It is certain that he had not been long in the neighbourhood before the folk round about began to spread wondrous stories of his sanctity and to resort to his cell for advice and ghostly comfort. He seems at first to have had two cells—this at Knaresborough and another at Starbeck, and it is said that the latter was destroyed over the saint's head by order of William de Stuteville, who held the castle and forest of Knaresborough about the end of the twelfth century. Robert then made himself a bower of trees, which de Stuteville was also going to destroy if three men had not appeared to him in his sleep, armed, says an old chronicle quoted in Drake's *Eboracum*, in such fearful manner, with burning engines of iron beset by sharp teeth, to say nothing of iron clubs and similar matters, that he not only resolved to spare the saint, but to placate Heaven by giving him all the land between his cell and Grimbald Crag, with two oxen, two horses, and two kine to till it. Robert, indeed, despite his sanctity, does not appear to have been badly off as regards the goods of this world, for he kept four servants, one of whom he used as collector of alms, another as personal attendant, while the other two tilled his land. As for his residence in the cave, it is said that before he came there it was occupied by another hermit, also very pious and presumably much poorer, who made way for the saint and went elsewhere—Robert, no doubt, buying him out, after a fashion not unknown to dealers in real estate at the present time. However all that may be, tradition has

it that he lived in this cave-chapel for some years—he is supposed to have been born in 1160 and died in 1218—and worked many miracles there, not the least wonderful of which was the instantaneous mending of a very bad compound fracture of a leg. He is reputed to have enlarged and beautified his chapel, which is a cavity hewn out of the solid rock, 10 feet in length, 9 in width, and 7 in height; but the curious figure of an armed knight at the door was probably added after his time. The chapel is a much pleasanter place than the cave, which is a gloomy cavern near the river about a mile away from the chapel, and is much more fitted to be the scene of a murder than the abode of a holy hermit, and there is strong reason to believe that St. Robert was not loth to exchange cave for chapel as soon as the previous occupant of the latter had removed himself and his belongings from it. But whether he spent most of his time in cave or chapel, and whether he lived on herbs, roots, and water, and slept on the hard rock; there seems no doubt that he finally died at Knaresborough and was buried in the chapel. On the news of his death being noised abroad the monks of Fountains, eager, after the manner of their kind, to obtain for their house whatever seemed valuable, whether in dead bodies or anything else, hastened over to Knaresborough to secure the saint's remains (of which, quaintly remarks an ancient chronicler, there was exceeding little left, seeing that the good man had inflicted much starvation and stripes upon himself for the salvation of his soul and the love of God), and would have carried them away if the townspeople had not made strenuous objection. As it was, townsfolk and monks came to blows around the chapel, whereupon a strong force marched down from the newly-erected castle, settled the matter in the rough-and-ready fashion of those days, sent the monks back to Fountains, and bade the townsfolk lay the saint under the stones which his knees had worn during long vigils. It is said that for some time after St. Robert was thus laid to rest there was a flow of oil from his tomb which was found to possess highly medicinal properties. According to Matthew Paris, this wonderful oil was much sought after by folk who needed the where-withal to heal their sores, and was held in very great veneration all over the countryside.

St. Robert's Cave is probably more famous through its connection with the strange and romantic story of Eugene Aram than because it was once the dwelling-place of the saint. The chapel in the limestone rock seems most in association with saintly and ascetic deeds; the cave near the river is suggestive of dark and bloody ones; and it is somewhat surprising that it has not been renamed since the earth made holy by the saint's sandals was desecrated by the hiding of Daniel Clarke's body in it. With the story of Eugene Aram most persons are familiar, either through the reports of his trial which were printed after his death, or from the novel of which Lord Lytton made him the fascinating hero. His trial excited wide-spread

interest all over the country, and was the common topic of discussion in every circle of society. The evidence adduced against him was certainly not of the character which would be necessary to secure conviction nowadays, and whether he was really guilty or not is a question which will never be answered. The incidents of his story as it relates to Knaresborough may be told in a few words: He was born at Ramsgill, about eighteen miles from Knaresborough, in 1704, and was educated for a time at least by Alcock, the eccentric parson of Burnsall in Wharfedale. According to his own account of himself, whatever education he possessed he had to thank his own application for. His father was a gardener—to Sir Edward Blackett at Newby Hall, says one writer; to Sir William Ingilby at Ripley, says another—and Eugene worked under him for some time, applying himself to study in his spare moments. That he must have had a natural love of learning and a gift of acquiring knowledge is evident from the fact that he made himself master of Latin, Greek, Hebrew, Celtic, and several modern languages, and had a very good acquaintance with mathematics and other sciences, and also of heraldry and antiquities. He was in London for a time as book-keeper to a merchant—after that he was tutor to William Craven, then a child, and afterwards famous as a scholar and philanthropist, at Gowthwaite Hall, an ancient house in Nidderdale. In 1731 he married Anne Spence, daughter of Christopher Spence of Lofthouse, the wedding taking place at Middlesmoor church. It is said that his first child was born, baptized, and buried at Middlesmoor, but if he lived there after his marriage his residence in the place was very brief, as he had settled down in Knaresborough by 1734, and had opened a school in a small cottage in White Horse Yard. There are several entries in the registers of the parish church of Knaresborough which record births and deaths in his family about this time, and in them his name is spelled Eujenius. Next door to Aram's cottage and school lived one Richard Houseman, a flax-dresser, with whom the schoolmaster formed an acquaintance. According to the accepted version of the story, these two, acting in collusion with a third man, Daniel Clarke, succeeded in carrying out various frauds on Knaresborough folk and hid the proceeds in St. Robert's Cave. Here, or close by, for the accounts vary in detail, Aram and Houseman one night in the winter of 1745 did Clarke to death and buried him in the cave once hallowed by the saint. There was some little wonder that Clarke should so suddenly disappear, but little seems to have been said about it, and no suspicion attached to either Houseman or Aram. The latter soon afterwards left Knaresborough and became usher in a school in London, whence he removed to Hayes, and finally to Lynn, in Norfolk. Houseman continued his flax-dressing trade after the old fashion, and though he was observed to be very moody and taciturn after Clarke's disappearance, and to have a great objection to going out save under cover of darkness, nobody seems to have suspected him of any

complicity in it. Things went on in this way for several years, Houseman dressing flax at Knaresborough, Aram teaching boys at Lynn, and then the blow fell on both. Some labourers digging in a quarry near St. Robert's Cave in 1758 came across a skeleton, and the folk of the neighbourhood immediately jumped to the conclusion that it was that of the missing Daniel Clarke. Houseman is said to have handled one of the bones and to have remarked that it was no more one of Daniel Clarke's than it was his, whereupon he was promptly arrested on suspicion of knowing something about the missing man's death. It is commonly supposed that he saved his own neck by turning king's evidence, and that he was equally guilty with Aram, if not the actual murderer. Aram, arrested at Lynn, was brought to York for trial, and though the evidence was inconclusive, and he himself delivered a speech which is spoken of with wonder and admiration because of its ability and evidence of learning, he was found guilty, sentenced to death, and executed at York in August 1759. His dead body was carried to Knaresborough that day and was locked up for the night in the stable of the Angel Inn. Next morning it was hung in chains on the roadside leading to Plumpton, and it is said that his widow gathered up the fragments as they fell from the gibbet and gave them decent burial. She survived him for several years, living first in Church Lane and afterwards in the High Street. She died in 1774, and the record of her demise is in the parish registers. As for Houseman, he lived on in the town, an object of dislike and suspicion, until 1777, and when he died there was such fear of a popular demonstration that his body was secretly conveyed to Marton, some distance away, during the night.

The name of St. Robert of Knaresborough, in addition to being mixed up with that of one of the most remarkable criminals of modern times, is also associated with an old-world feature of the town which has long since disappeared—the Priory of the Order of Brothers of the Redemption of Captives in Foreign Lands, otherwise, a praying society for the benefit of such crusaders as had had the hard luck to be captured by the Saracens. According to Burton's *Monasticon*, this was the only house of this order existing in Yorkshire, though there were ten others outside the county. It was founded by Richard Plantagenet, Earl of Poitou and Cornwall, about 1257, and in the beginning of the next century it seems to have been enriched by the lands which St. Robert had received from William de Stuteville. Leland, indeed, speaks of the order *de redemptione captivorum* as if St. Robert had founded it in Knaresborough, but the probability is that when he died he left his belongings to it. This order was allied to that of the Knights Templars, and the Knaresborough house had many privileges, including exemption from taxes and the right of affording sanctuary. The monks wore a long white mantle, emblazoned on the breast with a cross of blue and red. One third of their income was devoted to ransoming

crusaders taken prisoner in the Holy Wars; one third to the relief of the poor; and the remaining third to their own maintenance. When the house was surrendered at the dissolution of monasteries its annual value was returned at £30, 10s. 11d., and it and its lands became the property of the Earl of Shrewsbury, who soon afterwards sold them to the Slingsbys. There are now practically no traces of the priory left, though a good deal of its masonry has been utilised in building the surrounding houses. The last of the Slingsbys had some excavations carried out in 1862, and brought to light some carved work, fragments of stained glass, and similar remains, and round about the site there have been discovered at various times skeletons, coffins, coins, and carvings. In the lands of the Abbey Farm here there are still some traces of the tanks or ponds in which the monks preserved their fish. It is somewhat curious and significant that if St. Robert had anything to do with the founding of this religious house or gave lands to it there should have been no record of any attempt on the part of its prior and monks to secure his body for burial, as there was on that of the brethren from Fountains Abbey.

## IV

On the south bank of the Nidd, facing the remains of the ancient castle, a pleasant pathway along the river-side leads to the famous Dropping Well, a natural curiosity which invariably excites the wonder of all visitors to Knaresborough. It seems to have been a show-place of some degree for several centuries, for Leland saw it in full pride when he came into these parts in Henry VIII.'s time, and has various characteristic remarks to make about it. Most people who visit the Dropping Well are content to wonder and admire without attempting to explain the phenomena which it presents, but Leland had notions of his own and wrote them down. "This water," he says, "is so cold, and of such a nature that what thing soever faullith oute of the Rokkes ynto this pitte, or ys caste in, or growith about the Rokke and ys touched of this water, growith unto stone; or else sum sand, or other fine ground that is about the Rokkes, cummith downe with the continuall droppinge of the springes in the Rokkes, and cleavith on such things as it takith, and so cleavith aboute it and givith it by continuance the shape of a stone." He might have said, "and actually turnith it into stone," for so far as the ordinary observer is concerned, it seems impossible to say that the various objects which have been exposed to the waters of the Dropping Well are not stone. The appearance of the front of the well, or rather of the rock over which the water runs into a semicircular basin beneath, is distinctly reminiscent of the shrines, holy wells, and other religious haunts where devotees hang various objects in supplication or thanksgiving. Suspended by pieces of wire or string are such matters as

bird's nests, old hats, gloves, twigs from the neighbouring trees, leaves, plants, bundles of moss, boots, shoes—in short, almost anything that will present a novel appearance when the water has done its work. These so-called petrifications are of course disposed of to the traveller and sight-seer at handsome prices, as are also the trinkets and small articles worked out of the deposit, which is capable of taking a high polish and has a fine natural colour. It takes about three months' time to petrify a small object, and the non-scientific observer cannot help reflecting on the strange way in which Nature's method of working is exemplified in this well, for nothing is seen but the trickling of the water. But the scientist will doubtless say that the fact that the water of the Dropping Well contains so much carbonate of soda, so much sulphates of lime and magnesia, and so much carbonate of lime, accounts for everything. When Speed the topographer was here in the seventeenth century he boldly dared to say what Leland cautiously refrained from saying—that the water was “of this vertue and efficacie that it turnes wood into stone.” As a matter of sober fact the water has no petrifying properties; its chemical constituents are such that it encrusts whatever it falls upon with a tufaceous deposit of extraordinary hardness which takes the shape of the object acted upon and gives it all the appearance of complete petrification.

With the Dropping Well of Knaresborough the name of Mother Shipton, the world-famous prophetess, wise woman, sibyl, witch, or fortune-teller, is invariably associated. The neighbouring inn is called after her, and close to the well itself is a cave in which she is said to have spent a good deal of her time preparing spells and incantations and consulting the stars and her familiar spirits. There are people who believe that Mother Shipton was one of the most remarkable seers of the world: there are others who doubt her very existence. Particulars, real or legendary, of her career are hard to obtain, but there is one significant fact which cannot be overlooked. She made numerous prophecies which were speedily accomplished, as, for instance, the downfall of Cardinal Wolsey and the dissolution of the monasteries, and her success would in that age have been followed by immediate fame. But Leland was at Knaresborough just about the time (1540) when her reputation must necessarily have been at its highest, and he makes no mention of her. In the British Museum there are two works, published in 1633 and 1687, which contain her prophecies and some account of her, and in one of them it is hinted that full particulars of her and her work were preserved in the archives of a Yorkshire monastery. This was probably Beverley, to whose abbot she was accustomed to deliver her forecasts of coming events. According to accepted tradition this person's real name was Ursula Southill, and she was born at Knaresborough in a cottage close to the Dropping Well in July 1488. She married one Tobias Shipton of Shipton near York, and appears to have lived at that place as well as at Knaresborough. She died

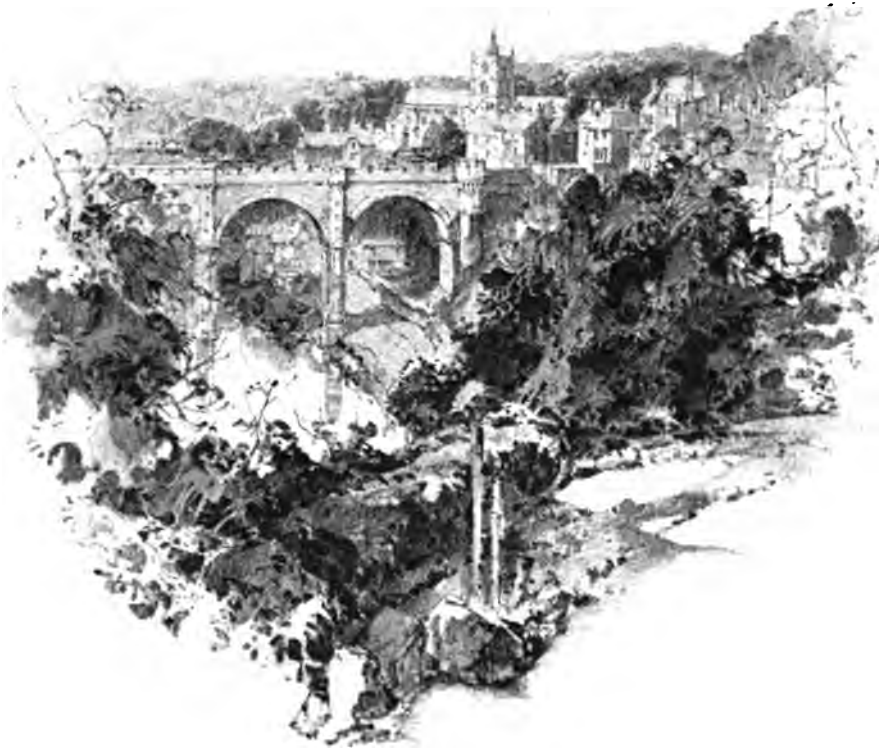
at Shipton in 1561, and was buried in the churchyard there, and the following lines were carved upon her tombstone :—

“ Here lies she who never lied :  
Whose skill often has been tried ;  
Her prophecies shall still survive  
And ever keep her name alive.”

Whether this foreteller of strange things ever did exist, or what her true character was, no one will ever be able to say with certainty. If she had a real existence she may have been a rank impostor who happened by great good luck to hit on a few fortunate coincidences, or a clever, prescient woman, like many another old-fashioned Yorkshire country-wife, whose natural wit helped her to see which way the wind was likely to blow. That she and her powers are firmly believed in to this day by the rural population of the county is a fact which proves nothing save that superstitions die out very slowly, and that anything which savours of the miraculous or the supernatural appeals with remarkable success to the ignorant.

Across the river from the Dropping Well there is a very remarkable instance of human perseverance and ingenuity in a series of rock-dwellings, to which the fanciful name of Fort Montague was given by its originators. From the river it has something of the appearance of a fortification ; seen close at hand it resolves itself into several excavations in the solid rock, connected with each other by flights of stairs. This place, now one of the regular show-places of the town, was commenced in 1770 by a man named Hill, a weaver of Knaresborough, who spent nearly twenty years in completing it to his satisfaction. He made considerable excavations in the rocks, formed terraces and planted them with shrubs, flowers, and trees, and battlemented the walls so that they should resemble a castle. Great interest was taken in his work by residents and visitors, and especially by one of the Duchesses of Buccleuch, who supplied Hill with funds and with plants for his ornamental gardens, and amused herself by watching the progress of the work and giving her advice upon it. Hill appears to have been something of an oddity—when his labours were completed and his spacious rock-dwelling an accomplished fact, he assumed the style and title of Governor of Fort Montague, and used to issue promissory notes, got up after the fashion of the notes of the Bank of England, for three-halfpence each. Bigland, in his description of the beauties of England and Wales, the Yorkshire volume of which was published in 1812, speaks of seeing Hill at work upon his rock-dwelling and terraces, and adds that he daily endeavoured to give some new decoration to his romantic surroundings. He speaks, too, of seeing another Knaresborough eccentricity flourishing at this time—a boy of twelve or thirteen years of age, the hair of whose head resembled a coarse, open wool of a light sandy colour, clotted together,

and forming a mass almost in the shape of a turban, equal in bulk to a half-peck measure. The elder brother of this boy, then dead, had been distinguished by a similar growth, but in his case the hair was white as wool. The boy's mother informed Bigland that she had been offered £60 by a person who travelled with a show if she would allow her son to be exhibited, but had declined the offer. The same writer further mentions that there was nothing remarkable in the hair of the parents of the boy—in each case it was of a dark, bright brown, and very little curled.



KNARESBOROUGH BRIDGE

## V

No account of Knaresborough would be complete which omitted some reference to John Metcalfe, the blind road-maker, commonly known as Blind Jack of Knaresborough, the story of whose life as narrated in various chap-books and local histories is full of surprising and remarkable incidents. He was the son of a labourer at Knaresborough, and was born in the town



on the 15th August 1717. In his sixth year he suffered severely from smallpox, and on his recovery it was found that his sight was entirely destroyed. It was impossible to do anything for him, and his family looked forward to his future with dismal forebodings. Metcalfe, however, speedily adapted himself to his changed condition—within a few months he could go along the street without a guide, and in a year or two would run all over the town as confidently as if he could see. He began to associate with other boys in bird-nesting and orchard-robbing expeditions, and would climb a tree with any of them. He also became expert at swimming, and on one occasion brought up a dead body from the bottom of the Nidd. As he grew up he formed a great liking for dogs and horses, and practised the violin with such success that he began to fiddle for a living. He soon became well known in the surrounding country, and in 1732 he settled at Harrogate as professional fiddler to the assemblies. About this time he bought a horse, kept game-cocks, went hunting and coursing, and at night fiddled for the nobility and gentry. Of his extraordinary ability in finding his way about, the following story is narrated: He was in York one winter's night in 1735, and was accosted by the landlord of the George Inn, who informed him that a gentleman in his house desired a guide to Harrogate. Metcalfe immediately consented to discharge the task, but stipulated that the gentleman should not know that he was blind. The landlord gave him an assurance on this point, and the two set out, passing out of York by Micklegate and going forward by Poppleton Field, Hessay Moor, and Skip Bridge. There was no turnpike road between York and Harrogate at that time, and much of the way lay through rough and dangerous country. Metcalfe and his companion passed along by way of Allerton Mauleverer to Knaresborough, where the gentleman desired his guide to stop and refresh himself, but the latter, not wishing his face to be seen, made some excuse and they pressed forward. Soon entering Knaresborough Forest they came to the narrow causeway which ran through it to Harrogate, and Metcalfe steering his way along its ins and outs ere long landed his man at the "Marquis of Granby." Here, by mere chance, the traveller discovered that his guide was a blind man, and declared that had he known it he would not have ventured with him for a hundred pounds, to which Metcalfe replied that he would not have lost his way for a thousand.

Of the life-history of this truly remarkable person, to whom the loss of sight seems to have meant nothing, it is impossible to speak properly within circumscribed limits. He cultivated sports and pastimes which are usually considered to be utterly beyond a blind man's powers—would go hunting, horse-racing, and coursing with the best, and had so fine a touch that he could distinguish the pips on a pack of cards and could play a very good game of whist. He travelled extensively, visiting every town of note in the county, and extending his rambles to London, Buckingham, and Windsor. He eloped with a very handsome young woman of Harro-

gate the night before she was to have been married to another man, and though her friends were at first highly indignant, his tact and winning manners soon brought them round. In 1745 he joined a company raised at Knaresborough for the defence of the kingdom against the Jacobites, and was with it at Newcastle, Carlisle, Falkirk, and Edinburgh, going through many extraordinary adventures. On returning to Knaresborough he embarked in business as a merchant of Scotch goods, and also in contraband trade, and it may be mentioned as a proof of his wonderful activity that he once, in answer to a pressing business letter, set out on horseback from Knaresborough at three in the morning and rode into Newcastle the same afternoon. In addition to these occupations he also engaged in the stage-coach business, bought and sold horses, and made money wherever he heard of a chance.

It was not until 1754 that Metcalfe entered upon the most serious business of his life—the making of highways and roads. That a blind man could execute such difficult engineering work seems incredible—that he did it with marvellous skill and success is an assured fact, as any one may see by inspecting the roads which he made. His first work was the construction of three miles of highway between Minskip and Ferrensby, on the Harrogate and Boroughbridge road, and he was so successful in this that other contracts speedily followed. Some of the principal were as follows: Five miles of road between Harrogate and Harewood, £1200; a mile and a half from Chapeltown to Leeds, £400; four miles over Rombald's Moor, £1350; nine miles near Wakefield, £1200; the roads from Wakefield to Pontefract, Doncaster, and Halifax, £6400; twenty-one miles of road between Wakefield and the Lancashire border, £4500; a road between Blackburn and Bury, £3500. He also became famous as a bridge-builder, having a plan of his own as to foundations, and it is said that it worked so well that none of his work ever fell. The extraordinary fashion in which he worked out his calculations, made his measurements, and the sure way in which he recognised and overcame a difficulty would have been astonishing in a man in full possession of his sight—that a blind man could accomplish such matters is nothing short of marvellous. He appears to have possessed a wonderful gift of calculation and a decided bent for mathematics, but it is characteristic of him that he had rules of his own for everything and made all his computations in a fashion peculiar to himself. During the last thirty years of his life he speculated a good deal in hay, and would accurately measure the weight of a stack by stretching its length and width with his arms. He remained in full possession of his faculties until the time of his death, April 27, 1810. He died at Spofforth, and was interred in the churchyard there. His wife had predeceased him by thirty-two years, but he left behind him four children, twenty grandchildren, and ninety great and great-great-grandchildren.

## VI

If Knaresborough can boast of associations such as those which centre round Eugene Aram, Blind Jack, Mother Shipton, and the Shock-Headed Boy, it can also point to the possession of some old-world matters and objects not less interesting than its castle or church. It is emphatically an antique place—no town in Yorkshire has more of the old and the curious about it. The traveller might spend some days here in exhausting the sights of the town and then leave much unseen that is well worth seeing. The old houses, ancient ruins, quaint yards and alleys all contain some feature of interest. There is an old house in the High Street wherein Oliver Cromwell lodged when he came to superintend the siege of Knaresborough Castle. It was then occupied by a man named Ellis, one of whose daughters, Eleanor, lived to a great age, and gave the following account of the great man's visit, which is extracted from an article in the *Gentleman's Magazine*, 1791: "When Cromwell came to lodge at our house at Knaresborough, I was then but a young girl. Having heard much talk about the man, I looked at him with wonder; being ordered to take a pan of coals, and aire his bed, I could not, during the operation, forbear peeping over my shoulder several times to observe this extraordinary person, who was seated at the far side of the room untying his garters. Having aired the bed, I went out, and, shutting the door after me, stooped and peeped through the keyhole, when I saw him rise from his seat, advance to the bed, and fall on his knees, in which attitude I left him for some time; when returning again, I found him still at prayer; and this was his custom every night so long as he stayed at our house; from which I concluded he must be a good man; and this opinion I always maintained afterwards, though I heard him very much blamed and exceedingly abused." The bedstead at which Eleanor Ellis saw the great Parliamentary general kneel to say his prayers is still preserved at the Manor House, and is a plain four-poster of oak, with curtains. There is a very fine apartment in the same house entirely panelled with oak and containing a carved oak fireplace of the Stuart period.

Amongst the quaint houses which abound in the market-place of Knaresborough there is one which is remarkable for the curious character of its architecture and for its old-fashioned, square-paned windows, which project over the pavement. It is said to be the oldest chemist's shop in England, and has been occupied by chemists and druggists continually since 1720. It possesses numerous professional relics in the shape of old herbals, bottles, mortars, and phials which are handed down from one proprietor—there have only been six since 1720—to another as sacred heirlooms. Under this house there is a very curious cellar which is of such proportions and arrangements that it seems quite probable that it was once used as a

dungeon. Another house in the High Street is famous as being the birth-place of the present Bishop of Oxford, whose father was a solicitor in the town. Dr. Stubbs was born here in 1825, and received his first education at the Grammar School, from whence he proceeded to Giggleswick School and thence to Oxford. He was successively Canon of St. Paul's, Bishop of Chester, and Bishop of Oxford, to which see he was translated in 1889, and has long been celebrated as a historian. A schoolfellow of his at Knaresborough, William Kaye, also a native of the town, was afterwards with him at Oxford, where they were both scholars of Lincoln College. Kaye, who died in 1892, achieved great distinction as a scholar and linguist, and was at one time head of Bishop's College, Calcutta. It was something more than a happy combination of circumstances that when Dr. Stubbs was consecrated Bishop of Chester in York Minster his old schoolfellow should be called upon to preach the sermon. There is an account of William Kaye's life and work in the late Dean Burgon's book, "Twelve Good Men and True," which contains its scholarly author's appreciation of several gifted men of the middle part of the present century, many of



whom were practically lost to the world in the seclusion of country parsonages. The house in which Dr. Stubbs was born is that standing over Lambert Passage. Many another house in the town has a history of its own, and if some of the old inns could speak they could tell rare tales of the old coaching-days, when the Royal Pilot, the Harrogate Highflyer, and the Tally-Ho used to rattle over the cobble-paved streets to their doors. The cottage wherein Eugene Aram lived in White Horse Yard was pulled down long years ago, but a grim memorial of him exists in a roof-beam in the inn called the "Brewer's Arms," which is credibly reported to be neither more nor less than one of the posts of the gibbet from which his body hung in chains. That another inn should be named after him is not strange. Whether it is because Lord Lytton made him the hero of a sentimental romance, and Tom Hood the subject of his finest ballad, the name of Eugene Aram invariably conjures up an atmosphere of romance which is nowhere so strongly felt as in the little

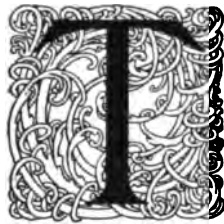
town by the Nidd with which his name must be for ever connected, and where it is to this day much better known and more talked of than the names of worthier men.

## CHAPTER XXXVII

### Harrogate: Old and New

HARROGATE IN THE OLD DAYS—EXPERIENCES OF EARLY VISITORS—CHARACTER OF THE MEDICINAL WATERS—HARROGATE AS A FASHIONABLE RESORT—MODERN HARROGATE—ENVIRONS OF HARROGATE—BILTON—CONYNGHAM HALL—ASSOCIATIONS OF THE WOODD FAMILY WITH CHARLES I.

#### I



THE famous inland watering-place of Harrogate, situate about three miles to the south-west of Knaresborough, is one of those towns which spring into active existence and importance within a very short space of time. A hundred years ago it was very little known, and visitors who came to it were perforce obliged to put up with accommodation which was somewhat rough and scanty compared to that afforded by the hotels and lodging-houses of the Harrogate of to-day. "In Knaresborough parish," says Cooke in his topographical description of Yorkshire, published in 1812, "about three miles west from the town, on a large and dreary moor, anciently part of Knaresborough Forest, are the villages of Upper and Lower Harrogate, a mile from which are the three medicinal springs so much celebrated for their different virtues. . . . The season for visiting Harrogate is from May to Michaelmas, and the company assemble and lodge in five or six large houses or inns on the moor, a mile from the villages; each house having every accommodation for their entertainment." There appears, however, to have been some difference of opinion on this point, for some of the earliest visitors to Harrogate have left their impressions of the place on record, and they are not always complimentary to the budding fashionable resort. "Harrogate," said Smollett, after a visit there about the middle of the last century, "is a wild common, bare, bleak, without tree or shrub, or the least sign of cultivation." Sydney Smith, who visited Harrogate many years later, seems to have formed no better opinion of it. "Harrogate," he remarks, "is the most heaven-forsaken country under the sun. When I saw it there were only nine mangy fir-

trees there, and even they all leaned away from it." But the author of the "Memoirs of John Buncler," writing of Harrogate as he found it in 1731, says that of all the watering-places he knew, it was the most charming. The same author gives some account of how he was lodged during his visit to Harrogate. "My apartment," he says, "is about ten feet square, and when the folding bed is down there is just room sufficient to pass between it and the fire. One might expect there would be no occasion for a fire at midsummer, but the climate is so backward that an ash-tree before my window is just beginning to put forth its leaves; and I am fain to have my bed warmed every night." A much earlier visitor, Thomas Baskerville the antiquary, who stayed at Harrogate during the reign of Charles II., speaks very complainingly of the way in which the women of the place pestered the water-drinkers with their attentions. He represents them as squabbling amongst themselves as to which of them should fill the visitor's glass with the medicinal water, and as being so persistent in their endeavours to turn a penny, as to force their way into private apartments early in the morning carrying pots of water in their hands. Also he remarks that these too-eager vendors of Harrogate water were accustomed to urge their own beauty upon visitors, and adds that they fell far short of any fairness, for their complexion had long been spoiled by the foulness of the sulphur water. All this elementary beginning of subsequent greatness has long since passed away: Harrogate is nowadays a handsome, well-built, well-appointed town, and has long been one of the most fashionable watering-places in Europe.

The situation of Harrogate is extremely advantageous. It stands on a plateau of wide extent, and its highest parts are 400 feet above sea-level. Though some of the earlier writers describe it as being bleak, bare, and cold, it possesses a very fine atmosphere, and cannot be surpassed for the purity and invigorating character of its air. Originally a part of the great forest of Knaresborough, wherein kings and nobles had many a long day's hunting, Harrogate seems to have been nothing more than a mere hamlet until one William Slingsby—a member of the family of Slingsby of Scriven—discovered the first medicinal spring in 1576. The water of this spring seems to have been much patronised during the remaining years of the sixteenth century, and the well from which it flows was named the English Spaw by one Dr. Bright in 1596. About the beginning of the seventeenth century a Dr. Stanhope of York discovered another spring of strong chalybeate water at Harrogate, and published a pamphlet upon its virtues entitled "Cures without Care," in which he advised all folk who found no benefit from the use of physic to repair to the northern Spa and drink its waters. Other springs were discovered in 1656, 1783, 1822, and 1849. The medical faculty was not slow in making known the great virtues of the waters of Harrogate. Dr. Bright seems to have written the first treatise upon them soon after Slingsby's discovery, and his work was followed by those of Dean, 1626, Stanhope, 1631, French, 1651, Neale, 1656, Simpson,

1668, Short, 1735, Alexander, 1773, Walker, 1784, and Garnet, 1793. To the last-named work was added an appendix by Jaques, a Harrogate physician of fame, who about a hundred years ago purchased an estate in the town, which had been laid out and planted by Lord Loughborough. "Before the discovery of these springs," says Bigland in his "Beauties of England and Wales," "it (Harrogate) was only a miserable hamlet, and for some time afterwards the company who began to resort thither experienced great inconveniences from the want of accommodation, being obliged to lodge in the farm-houses or cottages near the place till the year 1687, when the first inn, now called the "Queen's Head," was built. The resort increasing every year, encouraged the inhabitants to improve their accommodation, and before the commencement of the last century there were three good inns at High Harrogate. During the last fifty or sixty years the annual resort of nobility and gentry has been so great that this is become one of the principal watering-places in the north of England, having right spacious and commodious inns, furnished with every convenience that can be conducive to health or pleasure, besides a number of private lodging-houses for those who are desirous of a more retired situation. At the inns there are public balls twice a week, at each house in rotation, and every kind of amusement is here to be met with. . . . Harrogate now (1812) contains nearly 1500 inhabitants, many of whom are, by the resort of company, placed in opulent circumstances." If Bigland's estimate of the population in 1812 is correct there must have been a considerable increase in the place between that year and 1796, when Nicholson's drawing of Low Harrogate, a very quaint and interesting piece of work, was engraved and published by Walker. In this drawing several of the old inns, and notably the "White Hart," the "Crown," and the "Half-Moon," are shown; but the whole place is no more than a handful of houses flanking an open space, and its population, including visitors, could not have exceeded two or three hundred.

Of the mineral waters at Harrogate it needs only to be said that they are respectively saline, sulphureous, and chalybeate. They are efficacious in a variety of complaints and diseases, and most of them are not too pleasant to the taste. On the original sulphur well Cooke has some plain remarks to offer. "The Stinking, or Sulphur Spring," he says, "taken in dropsical, scorbutic, and gouty cases, rises in the town, and is received in four basons under four different buildings; at one it is drank, and at the others used for hot and cold baths. It is perfectly clear, but the taste and smell (resemble) a composition of rotten eggs, sea-water, and sulphur, and extremely salt. It is the strongest sulphur water in Great Britain. The warm bath of it is of great benefit in pains and aches, spasms and lameness, dissolving hard swellings, curing old ulcers and scrofulous complaints, and it is a powerful cleanser of the stomach and bowels." It is highly probable that the legendary miraculous flow of liquid from the tomb of St. Robert of Knaresborough was in reality a leaking out of one of the



LOW HARROGATE A CENTURY AGO

*From an old drawing by F. NICHOLSON*

medicinal springs of the district, and was turned to good account by the miracle-mongers of that day. Few watering-places of the world have so many springs as this, or afford so many chances of healing—if all that the doctors have to say on the matter is true.

## II

During the present century Harrogate has become a highly fashionable resort, and it is extremely probable that a very large number of those persons who visit it do so with less intention of drinking the waters than of making the town the centre of various expeditions and excursions of pleasure. It is admirably situated for this purpose—no town in the neighbourhood more so—and it is therefore not surprising to find that it grows in bulk and in favour every year. Its pure air and invigorating climate are in themselves sufficient temptations to allure the leisured person to it, but it is also most conveniently situated for visiting Wharfedale and Nidderdale, and the various show-places in both valleys. It is needless to say that the entire aspect of modern Harrogate proclaims the reason of its existence. It is a town of magnificent hotels, palatial hydropathic establishments, great lodging-houses, water-drinking pavilions, concert-



rooms, promenades, ornamental gardens, and the like, and though it is so efficacious as a cure place the traveller will not find himself amongst crowds of cripples in mingling with the throngs which frequent its public resorts. It has been a borough since 1884, and its authorities have spared no effort to attract the world to visit it. Public provision for the comfort of visitors, however, began a long time ago. As far back as 1743 that very estimable lady, the Lady Betty Hastings, gave £50 towards building a church near the middle of the Common in High Harrogate, and since then churches and chapels have sprung up in considerable numbers. In 1786 Alexander, Lord Loughborough, covered the old well over with a dome and laid out a small estate in very tasteful fashion. In 1835 were opened the Cheltenham Pump Room, a very fine building in the Doric style, and the Montpelier Pump Room, an ornate erection, the architectural qualities of which are not too apparent. Both these places are on a vast scale and afford many diversities of amusement and recreation, as well as opportunities of drinking and bathing. For amusements Harrogate has never wanted since the days when Blind Jack of Knaresborough used to play his fiddle for the company to dance to at the various inns. At the beginning of the present century the Harrogate theatre was visited by some of the best actors and actresses of the day, and notably by Mrs. Jordan and Miss Mellon; nowadays the town is somewhat famous for its concerts, whereat music of the best sort is performed by the most capable exponents. Harrogate possesses one feature which gives it a great advantage over other towns in these days of overcrowding of streets and houses. This is a vast, open space of two hundred acres, known as the Stray, which was secured, by an Act of Parliament passed in 1770, from disturbance by builder or speculator, and is accordingly open to air and sky for ever for the common good of the people. Around this open space the town has grown, and the

Stray itself is probably the only feature of old Harrogate which still remains unchanged.

The immediate surroundings of Harrogate, bleak and bare though Smollett and Sidney Smith considered them to be, are not only interesting, but picturesque, and full of attraction for lovers of moorland scenery. Just without the town, from which it may be approached by way of the Valley Gardens, is a curious tract of land called Black Bogs or Bogs Field, in which there are numerous springs of mineral water, chiefly of sulphur. Near this place is the Royal Bath Hospital, an institution devoted to poor persons for whom a course of Harrogate waters is necessary. It was first erected in 1824, but the



The Old Bath Hospital

accommodation which it then afforded soon proved to be inadequate, and it was twice enlarged within the next few years. Ten years ago it was rebuilt at a cost of £30,000, and was reopened by the late Prince Albert Victor of Wales. Towards this sum a private donor, Miss Rawson of Nidd Hall, gave £10,000 in order that a convalescent home might be added to the hospital. At Harlow Carr, a little distance across country from the Bogs Field, there are more mineral springs, of a milder nature than those in the town, and close by these is a tower, built on a slight eminence and rising to a height of 100 feet, from the top of which there are fine views of the surrounding country. This tower is furnished with telescopes, and it is said that the Peak of Derbyshire can be seen from it on a clear day.

In the country lying between Harrogate and Knaresborough there are several places and houses of more than ordinary interest to the traveller and the lover of ancient things. Bilton, a small village just beyond High Harrogate, is an old Celtic settlement which is mentioned in the Domesday Survey. In

the old manor-house or hall of this place lived Thomas Stockdale, who was Member of Parliament for Knaresborough at the time of the Civil War. He was one of the most intimate friends of Lord Fairfax, and the published "Correspondence" of that distinguished family contains numerous letters of his. At Belmont, nearer Knaresborough, there stood until a short time ago a very fine oak tree, which was supposed to be the last of the thousands of similar trees that once grew so thickly within the Forest of Knaresborough. This tree measured nearly twenty-five feet in girth, and was used a century ago as the foundation of a corn-stack. In a farm close



HARLOW CARR

by here there were unearthed some years ago two British querns, primitive appliances for grinding corn by hand, which seem to have been in considerable use in both Nidderdale and Wharfedale.

On one of the most picturesque stretches of the Nidd in the district



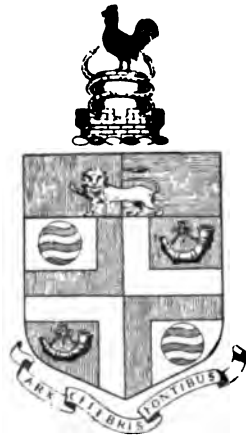
Valley Gardens  
and Bath Hospital.

lying between Harrogate and Knaresborough stands a historic house, Conyngham Hall, whose owners have certain direct associations with the Stuarts, and particularly with Charles I. Originally the seat of the ancient family of Coghill, whose name it bore until a century ago, this house, after being rebuilt by Marmaduke Coghill in 1555, was sold to the Countess of Conyngham, who enlarged and altered it, and gave it her own name. In 1856 it came into possession of the family of Woodd, one of whose ancestors, Captain Basil Woodd, is said to have attended Charles I. on the morning of his execution, and to have received from the king's hands a memento of him in the shape of the silver star worn on the mantle of

the Order of the Garter. This star has been religiously treasured by the family ever since it came into their possession. It is not the only memorial of their connection with the Stuarts to be seen at Conyngham Hall, for there is also preserved there the draft of a petition presented by them to Charles II. after the Restoration, in which are set forth the many trials and difficulties which they were obliged to endure on account of their loyalty. It sets forth the necessities of Basil Woodd, doctor of law, Chancellor of Rochester, and of his sons, Basil, Thomas, and John, and appears to have been written by Captain Basil Woodd himself. The

writer states that his father's Chancellorship and practice, to the value of a thousand pounds per annum, had been taken away, and that he died at Oxford while serving the king; having also been plundered of all his goods contained in his house at Greenwich, which house the writer sold for £400 in order to support the family. He then goes on to set forth his own services, and to record the wounds and injuries which he received in the Civil Wars; together with the services and sore plight of his brothers, Thomas, sometime Fellow of Merton College, and John, cornet to Colonel Stewart in the Earl of Cleveland's brigade. The whole summing up of the matter is pathetic in its brevity, and is no doubt but one more instance of the way in which more than one family was brought to something like beggary by a zealous devotion to the Royalist cause during the troublous times of the Civil War:—

“ . . . Wee are much in debt. Our plate, horses, and money that wee spent upon Chirurgeons, and armes, and other necessaries in the warres comes to a considerable summe, besides the loss of my ffather's chancellorship and practice, and the plundering of us in Oxfordshire, and the loss of our time, so that wee were brought to ruine for our Loialty.”



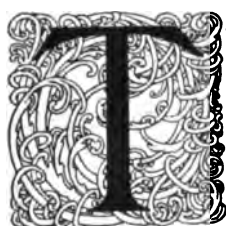
THE ARMS OF HARROGATE

## CHAPTER XXXVIII

### The Nidd Valley

SCRIVEN AND THE SLINGSBY FAMILY—SCOTTON, THE BIRTHPLACE OF GUY FAWKES—NIDD—RIPLEY AND THE INGILBYS—HAMPSTHWAITE—PETER BARKER, THE BLIND JOINER—DARLEY—GREENHOW HILL—DACRE—LOW HALL AND THE BENSONS—BRIMHAM ROCKS.

#### I



THE surroundings of the Nidd in the stretch lying between Knaresborough and Pateley Bridge are entirely different in character to those which enclose its lower reaches. The wide, level pasture-lands of the Vale of York give place to romantic scenery, and every successive mile covered by the traveller presents him to new features of increasing interest. Knaresborough itself is so full of charm, viewed only from a picturesque standpoint, that one might excusably doubt whether the glories of the dale had not concentrated and exhausted themselves in it. But Knaresborough is only the threshold of the Nidd valley, just as Pateley Bridge is the key of Nidderdale proper. From Knaresborough onwards the valley opens up a remarkable stretch of country, as rich in associations as in picturesqueness and beauty. The valley of the Nidd at this point is often compared to the valley of the Rhine, but the English character of the former is never lost sight of—there is no suspicion of anything foreign to English scenery in its villages and hamlets, and the dale folk met alongside the river are Yorkshire men and women to the heart's core. This bit of Yorkshire, indeed, is in more respects than the mere geographical one the very heart of the county; it was settled at a period going far back beyond the coming of the Romans, and is closely allied with some of the most remarkable events and prominent characters of Yorkshire history. In many of these Nidd-side villages history is bridged over in wonderful fashion, and the mind taken back at a leap to days when the world moved under very different conditions. It is only necessary to walk a little distance out of Knaresborough to come across a place identified

with the fortunes of one family for nearly a thousand years. Scriven Park, the ancestral home of the Slingsbys, lying on the north bank of the Nidd amidst ideal surroundings, appears at first sight to be of no more significance than usually attaches to a country seat. Its Elizabethan mansion, standing in a park which encloses 400 acres, tells little of the folk who have lived in it. Yet here, or hereabouts, in close touch with this particular corner of the county, there have been first Scrivens and then Slingsbys since the Norman overswept the land. When the Royal Forest of Knaresborough was made, a de Scriven was appointed Hereditary Master Forester, charged with collection of all fees, fines, and other customary dues and exactions. When the last male of the direct line of Scrivens died, in the person of Henry de Scriven, the manor and the hereditary office passed to William de Slingsby, who had married Henry's daughter and heiress, Johanna, in 1328. From that time onward the Slingsbys of Scriven did many things which loom large in the history of the county. Between 1572 and 1761 they supplied the folk of Knaresborough with fifteen members of Parliament. Some of them were soldiers; some of them were in their time High Sheriffs of Yorkshire; one of them proved his loyalty to the Stuarts by suffering death on the scaffold. Near the village green of Scriven is the old house in which the Slingsbys lived before the present mansion was erected, but it has been largely modernised and little of its sixteenth-century quaintness remains save the Slingsby coat-of-arms over the doorway.

More associations with famous names and deeds await the traveller at Scotton, the next village along the north bank of the Nidd, going towards Ripley. Here at various periods dwelt the families of Scotton, Nessfield, Percy, and Pulleine, and here more than once there have been extremely interesting discoveries of antiquities, which prove that the place must have been settled long before history began to be written. When the new church was about to be built here, ten years ago, it was found necessary to remove a large mound of earth which had long been a conspicuous object in the village, and which no one appears to have thought worthy of any examination. Beneath this mound, which was about 60 feet in length by 24 feet in width, there were discovered various cavities, arranged in a circle, all of which contained calcined ashes. In a field at a little distance there have been found during recent years numerous copper and steel remains, chiefly pitchers and battle-axes, and at Scotton-Thorp, in the same parish, a labourer some years ago turned up a gold ring of very fine workmanship. There is no doubt that Scotton was an important settlement in Anglo-Saxon times, and that the tumulus discovered in 1889 has some connection with that period. The chief interest attaching to Scotton, however, lies in the fact that it was the early home of Guy Fawkes, the conspirator. In a pamphlet entitled "The Fawkeses of York," published anonymously at Westminster in 1850, but held to be the work of Robert Davies, F.R.S., Town Clerk of York, there is a very painstaking account of Guy Fawkes's connection

with the county and with the old Hall at Scotton. His father, Edward Fawkes, was an advocate of the Consistory Court at York, and married one Edith, whose surname has never been discovered. They had four children, of whom Guy (baptized at the church of St. Michael-le-Belfry, York,

April 16, 1570) was the second. Edward Fawkes died in 1578, and his widow married Dionis Bainbrigge, a gentleman residing at Scotton, to which village she and her children of course at once removed. Here Guy Fawkes spent a good deal of his boyhood, and made the acquaintance of the various families in the neighbourhood. The author of the pamphlet just referred to argues that he was under Protestant influences until he went to Scotton, and that he there fell under Papist influence, the Bainbrigges, Percys, Winters, and others of his acquaintance there being all staunch adherents of the ancient faith. This part of Nidderdale, indeed, supplied no less than six out of the seven conspirators who hatched and engineered the Gunpowder Plot — Guy Fawkes, Thomas Winter, Robert Winter, Christopher Wright, John Wright, and Thomas Percy. The Winters were nephews of Sir



THE MARKET CROSS  
AND STOCKS, RIPLEY

William Ingilby of Ripley; Percy was a kinsman of the Percys of Spofforth; the Wrights were his brothers-in-law. Thus the first beginnings of the most famous conspiracy in English history may be said to have originated in one of the quietest of Yorkshire villages.

Between Scotton and Ripley there is an ancient village named Nidd, around which various historical associations centre. According to Bede, it was at Nidd that the Synod which restored Wilfrith to the Archbishopric of York in 675 was held. Until about thirty years ago there was here a very interesting church, which must have been one of the smallest in England. It was of very primitive construction, and only accommodated

sixty persons. In the porch was a holy-water stoup, and it is said that the folk of the district had formed a habit of placing their fingers in this ere they entered the church, and that the custom was only broken down by the destruction of the ancient edifice. There is an old cross in the churchyard here, but it is devoid of inscription or decoration. At a little distance from the modern church, an imposing structure in the Early English style, in which the thirteenth-century font is still preserved, are the traces of something like an encampment, which is supposed to have been the site of a Saxon settlement. Here, some years ago, a vault was opened which contained two skeletons, but nothing definite has been ascertained as to the exact character of the place.

The small market-town of Ripley, which lies close to the Nidd, is one of those model places which would be more picturesque if they were less neat and formal. At the beginning of this century it was a very quaint, old-world place, full of low-walled, thatched-roofed cottages and houses, intersected by narrow lanes paved with cobble-stones. A good many of the houses were half-timbered, and they were in many instances so much below the level of the streets that it was necessary to descend into them by a flight of steps. All this old-world air, however, has disappeared from Ripley. About seventy years ago Sir William Ingilby pulled it to pieces and rebuilt it, and though its church is ancient enough, and its market-square, or green, possesses a pre-Reformation cross and the old parish stocks, it is a place of modern and model appearance. Its church is old and full of interest, and contains some remarkably fine altar-tombs and monuments. The early history of its foundation is obscure, but there are grounds for believing that it existed before the Norman Conquest and had been partly destroyed by the Danes. It was restored or completely rebuilt by one of the Ingilbys about the end of the fourteenth century, and though it has undergone numerous renovations since then, it still remains a very excellent example of Decorated Gothic architecture. It consists of nave, north and south aisles, transepts, chancel with side chapels, north and south porches, and a square tower at the west end. In the south chapel there is a magnificent twelfth-century rood-



TOMB OF SIR THOMAS INGILBY



screen of black oak, which originally filled the chancel arch and was decorated with twenty coats-of-arms. The monuments of the church are for the most part in memory of members of the Ingilby family, and the most notable is that of Sir Thomas Ingilby and his wife, who were interred here about the end of the fourteenth century. It is an altar-tomb of worked limestone of the style of the period of Edward III., and is considered to be an almost perfect specimen of the work of that time. In the churchyard are the remains of a Weeping Cross, which is said to be the only one existent in the county, and is supposed to have occupied its present position since about 1400. There is now nothing left of it but a base and socket stone, but the eight knee-holes in the latter, whereat penitents abased themselves to weep and pray, are plainly marked.

The Ingilbys of Ripley have held the manor of that name for nearly six hundred years. At the Norman Conquest it was given to Ralph Paganel, and it was afterwards in possession of the Trussebuts. The Ripley estates were sublet during the eleventh century to a family which took its name from them and subsequently bought them from their then holders, the families of des Ros and Trussebut. The last of their line, Edeline de Ripley, married

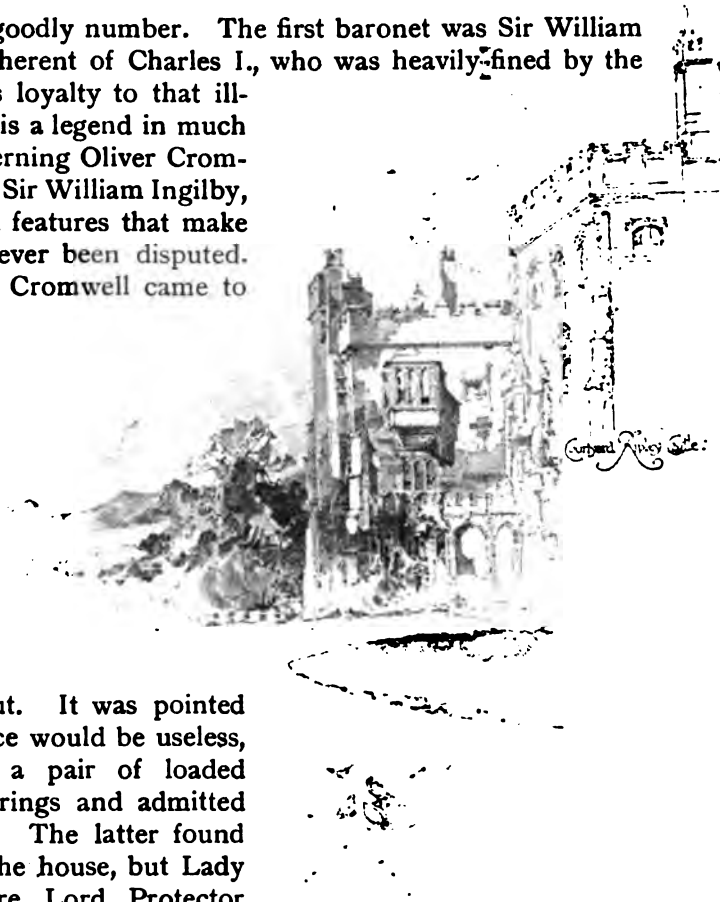
Sir Thomas Ingilby, and since then the manor has been held continuously by his successors. Sir Thomas Ingilby was Justice of Common Pleas in 1362, and of the King's Bench in 1377. He obtained a charter of free warren from Edward III. in 1536, and a market-charter for Ripley in the following year. His eldest son and successor, Thomas, was also a Justice of Common Pleas, and appears to have added to the wealth and estates of the family, for at the Poll-Tax of 1378 his was the largest of all the assessments in the wapentake of Claro—100 shillings. Like the Slingsbys of Scriven, the Ingilbys of Ripley have given diplomats, soldiers, and public



men to the country in goodly number. The first baronet was Sir William Ingilby, the devoted adherent of Charles I., who was heavily-fined by the Commonwealth for his loyalty to that ill-fated monarch. There is a legend in much favour hereabouts concerning Oliver Cromwell and the wife of this Sir William Ingilby, which possesses certain features that make one regret that it has ever been disputed. It is to the effect that Cromwell came to

Ripley Castle on the night of the battle of Marston Moor and demanded accommodation for himself and his troop. Sir William Ingilby was away, but his lady was at home, and being a zealous hater of crop-headed Parliamentarians, she was at first minded to

keep the great man out. It was pointed out to her that resistance would be useless, whereupon she stuck a pair of loaded pistols in her apron-strings and admitted Cromwell and his men. The latter found rest somewhere about the house, but Lady Ingilby and the future Lord Protector passed the night in the hall, watching each other in mutual distrust. The house which this resolute dame thus defended has been rebuilt, enlarged, and restored several times during the past six centuries. It was entirely renovated by Sir William Ingilby in 1555, and again by one of his successors about a hundred years ago. It contains a large collection of family armour and mediæval weapons and a number of portraits of dead and gone Ingilbys, and is surrounded by some of the finest gardens and pleasure-grounds in the county. The park is of considerable extent, and is remarkable for the size and beauty of its trees, some of which appear to be so old as to suggest that they were originally part and parcel of the great Forest of Knaresborough.



## II

On the south side of the Nidd, almost opposite Ripley, lies Hampsthwaite, now a quiet, peaceful-looking village, but once a market-town of some importance. Here the Roman road from Olicana (Ilkley) to Isurium (Aldbrough) crossed the Nidd. Hampsthwaite is not mentioned in the records of the Domesday Survey, but its name indicates that it was an Anglo-Saxon settlement. Its church was in existence soon after the Norman Conquest, and was at one time in possession of the monks of Knaresborough. Within the parish there are two chapels-of-ease, or chantries, one dedicated to Our Lady and St. Anne, the other to St. Sitha. The market charter of Hampsthwaite was granted by Edward I. at Lincoln in 1304, and provided for a market every Friday and an annual fair of four days at the Feast of St. Thomas the Martyr (Thomas à Becket), to whom the church was dedicated. In the old days the markets and fairs were held in the open space before the vicarage, in the middle of which stood a cross which has now disappeared. The present church is practically a modern structure, having been erected in 1820 from the materials of the old one. It contains several monuments of members of local families, the most notable of which is a slab on which is set forth the descent of one William Simpson of Gilthorn and Felliscliffe in the parish of Hampsthwaite, who died in 1776, from Archil the Saxon, from whom he was twenty-sixth in the direct line. One of the ancestors of Thackeray the novelist was a holder of land in this parish as far back as the Poll-Tax of 1378, and others were parish clerks of Hampsthwaite in succession to each other during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Until 1873 Hampsthwaite possessed a celebrity whose fame was almost as considerable as that of Blind Jack of Knaresborough. This was one Peter Barker, well known as the Blind Joiner of Hampsthwaite, an account of whose life was published at Pateley Bridge soon after his death. Barker was born in July 1808, and was totally deprived of his sight at the age of four. He, like Metcalfe of Knaresborough, was taught to fiddle with a view of making his living by performing at village merry-makings. It is said that as he grew towards manhood he fell into habits of intemperance, and suddenly resolved to give up his fiddling and settle down to some steady occupation. His choice fell upon the carpentering trade, and he soon proved his ability by making a chair. Finding that his blindness in no way interfered with his success, he became a joiner and wrought at his trade for the remainder of his life. He used all the ordinary tools and instruments, with the exception of a foot-rule which he designed after an ingenious fashion suggested to him by a friend. He appears to have been well supplied with work and to have turned out everything in excellent style. The writer of his memoir speaks of finding him engaged in work at Hampsthwaite church in 1868,



HAMPSTHWAITE

five years previous to his death, and of seeing what he had accomplished. He had on this occasion lowered the fronts of pulpit and reading-desk, brought forward a pew, and refronted the latter with panels of old carved oak. He sang in the church choir, rang the curfew bell in the church-tower, made nets and curtains, taught himself to read from raised type, and used to fiddle to the village children on an instrument of his own manufacture. His most remarkable feat was the taking to pieces and cleaning of the church clock of Hampsthwaite — an achievement even more remarkable than that of Metcalfe's in conducting a traveller from York to Harrogate. He possessed a very delicate sense of touch, and could tell the hour on a watch by running his fingers across the dial. Barker died in his cottage near Hampsthwaite church in February, 1873.

On either side of the Nidd going westward from Hampsthwaite there are places and houses of much interest, lying amidst scenery which gradually increases in romantic character. All around Birstwith and Swarcliffe the surroundings of the Nidd are full of picturesqueness and even beauty, and at Clint, on the opposite bank of the river, there are numerous remnants of the olden days, of which the most remarkable is the fragment of a wayside cross. There is a very fine modern church at Birstwith, built by the Greenwoods of Swarcliffe Hall, a mansion which occupies a commanding position above the village and the river. Hereabouts the banks of the Nidd assume a steeper aspect, and the land on both sides becomes wilder. Almost opposite Swarcliffe Hall, on the south side of the valley, is Hartwith, a village on the edge of the moors, from the churchyard of which there is a remarkable view of Nidderdale. There is a picturesque old farmstead near here called Hardcastle Garth, the

original holders of which settled in the neighbourhood five centuries ago, and another named Dowgill Farm, which was held by a family of that name in the fifteenth century. Old houses with histories attached to them abound in this valley, and there are few of them in which the traveller will not find some relic or monument of long-dead centuries—a quaint sundial, a piece of rare carving, or a low-ceilinged parlour panelled from floor to beams in old oak, grown mellow with the passage of many years.

From Darley, a pleasantly situated village on the south bank of the Nidd a little beyond Birstwith, a profitable departure from Nidderdale proper may be taken up Darley Dale, a valley which leads to Greenhow Hill, one of the highest points of ground dividing the Wharfe from the Nidd. On a considerable eminence which separates Darley Beck from the Washburn stands one of the old peels, or lodges, of the Forest of Knaresborough, known as Padsid Hall, and now in use as a farmstead. It stands at an elevation of about 950 feet above sea-level and commands wide-spreading views of the surrounding country. Although the square tower which used to stand at the north-east corner of the house has been pulled down and its materials used in the construction of a barn, this ancient forest lodge is well worth examination, and presents many features of interest. It is built on a rock, and its grouted walls are at least a yard thick. A courtyard lies between the east and west wings, and the entire structure has pointed gables and mullioned windows of the Tudor style. For several generations this lonely place was occupied by a family named Wigglesworth, who purchased it from the Ingilbys towards the end of the sixteenth century. There is some fine carved work, chiefly of oak, in the interior. From Padsid Hall the land gradually rises until the summit of Greenhow Hill and the village of the same name is reached. Greenhow Hill, which occupies a position nearly 1500 feet above sea-level, is said to be the highest village in Yorkshire. It is an irregularly built place, and its general appearance is wild and bare. There is little vegetation, and since the lead mines around it became less productive, many of the houses have fallen into a ruinous condition. Here in the old days stood the Craven Cross, a boundary stone marking the division of the lands of the Cliffords and the Mowbrays, and here, in the times when ponies carried coal from Ingleton to Pateley Bridge and Ripon, they were unloaded for the night and turned out to forage for themselves, while their drivers curled themselves up in the heather and went to sleep.

In the days when Fountains Abbey was flourishing its monks possessed very valuable mining rights in the district south of the Nidd, and especially at Dacre, which lies between the high ground culminating in Greenhow Hill and the river. Originally in possession of the Mowbrays, who had extensive demesnes in Nidderdale, Dacre in mediæval times was very largely held by the community at Fountains, who had granaries and store-houses here and on the adjoining moors. The house known as Dacre Hall was built

out of the materials of one of these granaries. In the particulars of the possessions of Fountains Abbey, carefully drawn up by the commissioners appointed to dissolve the house in 1539, there are numerous entries concerning lands, messuages, and other properties at Dacre, the entire value of which seems likely to have amounted to a considerable sum. There is evidence that lead-mining had been carried on in the country round about Dacre and Greenhow Hill from the beginning of the Roman occupation. In the *Transactions of the Royal Society* for 1740 there appeared an article by Dr. Kirshaw, rector of Ripley, in which some account was given of the discovery in this neighbourhood in 1735 of two bars, or pigs, of lead bearing the inscription *Imp Caes Domino Aug Cos VII—Brig*, which implied that they had been smelted in the Brigantian country about the year 87. One of these bars is preserved in the British Museum, the other at Ripley Castle. There appear to be no evidences of the working of the mines between the period indicated by the date referred to and the time when the monks of Fountains had rights over them, nor are there any details as to how the latter made use of their privileges, though it is well known that they had a smelting works at the place afterwards called Smelthouse, and that the ore was brought there on the backs of mules from the mines at Greenhow Hill, which were probably worked by their bondsmen. There is a very interesting old house near Dacre called Low Hall, from whence sprang the Benson family, ancestors of the late Archbishop of Canterbury. It is a quaint and picturesque place of the Tudor style, with heavily mullioned windows, low roofs and gables, and an aspect which suggests that it was fully intended to form a comfortable abiding place for the family which first inhabited it. Here numerous Bensons lived during the eighteenth century. Theirs was a genuine Yorkshire stock, and it is a singular proof of their adherence to their native county, that the late Primate was the first member of the family in the direct line to be born out of Yorkshire during a period of five hundred years. Another interesting fact in connection with Dacre is that it was at Dacre Banks Mill that flax was first spun by machinery. The inventor of this process was one Charles Gill, a Dacre man who educated himself and attained great skill in all matters appertaining to mechanical invention. His family, like that of the Bensons, was of ancient descent, and had existed in Nidderdale for several centuries.

Since the railway line made a new highway along the windings of the valley of the Nidd, the station at Dacre Banks has become the nearest point of vantage for reaching the famous Rocks of Brimham, which are situated on a high plateau, 1000 feet above sea-level, on the opposite side of the river from Dacre. From Summer Bridge, a little to the north-west of the village, a pleasant road leads to the heights of Hartwith Moor and thence to the Rocks—strange, fantastic masses of stone which are spread over an area of sixty or seventy acres of ground. The first—and the last—impression of the traveller on beholding these remarkable objects will be one of



BRIMHAM ROCKS

unmixed wonder. There is, of course, a scientific explanation of their existence. "The Brimham Rocks," says Mr. Speight, in his exhaustive account of Nidderdale, "like those at Plumpton and Addingham Edge, between Airedale and Wharfedale, belong to the Third Grits of the Millstone Grit series. It is a rather coarse, false-bedded stone of very uneven hardness, being full of quartz pebbles, and containing a large proportion of red felspar. It is to this unequal texture and peculiar composition, subject to the unceasing forces of wind, rain, and frost, once much more violent than now, that the decomposition and resulting manifold strange forms of the rock are to be attributed. Huge thick-bedded masses have been fractured along vertical joints, and these joints by the grinding action of winds and rain-wash, continued through numberless ages, have in some places separated the beds into immense parallel fragments, presenting the appearance almost of having been split in twain by some superior force. The beds no doubt have once been continuous and coextensive with the strata on the opposite side of the valley, which present a similar fantastic cliff, weathered to the east. During the Glacial Period, when the ice in this valley was several hundred feet thick, and these moors were the gathering-ground of the frozen mass, the operations of frost and snow, and subsequent melting of the ice, continuing for centuries, must have loosened and broken

up this yielding felspathic strata very considerably. Afterwards gales of wind, rain, and snow, of unremitting severity and prolonged endurance, began the work of sculpturing the rocks, leaving the débris of sand at their bases, which has continued ever since." This gives a very lucid explanation of how the Brimham Rocks came to be, but to most people their scientific origin is of less interest than their present fantastic appearance. Some notion of their curious formation may be gathered from the names which have been bestowed upon them, as the Lamb, the Idol, the Druid's Reading Desk, the Yoke of Oxen, the Pulpit, the Baboon's Head, the Oyster Shell, the Dancing Bear, the Elephant, the Tortoise, the Chimney, the Flower Pot, the Rhinoceros, the Sphinx, the Cannon, the Druid's Profile, the Frog, the Boar's Snout, and the Hippopotamus, all of which bear or are supposed to bear a close resemblance to the things and animals after which they are named. One of the most remarkable features of this rock-covered plateau are the Rocking Stones, four large masses of rock near the guide's house, the two larger of which move at the least touch, though their approximate weight is fifty and twenty-five tons. The most striking resemblance to a real object in these rocks is that seen in the one called the Dancing Bear, which is singularly life-like. But the entire area of Brimham Rocks is full of curious and remarkable instances of the fantastic things which Nature can produce, and there is a further incentive to the traveller to ascend to it from the valley beneath in the fact that from its highest points he may gaze over miles and miles of hill, moor, and river.

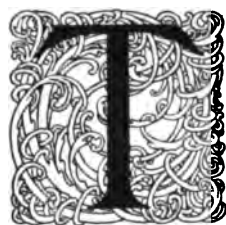


## CHAPTER XXXIX

### Pateley Bridge and Nidderdale

PATELEY BRIDGE—BEWERLEY—YORKE'S FOLLY—RAVENSGILL AND GUY'S CLIFF — GOWTHWAITE HALL — RAMSGILL — MIDDLESMOOR — HOW STEAN BECK—DISCOVERY OF ROMAN COINS AT HOW STEAN—GOYDEN POT—SUBTERRANEAN COURSE OF THE RIVER—SURROUNDINGS OF THE SOURCE OF THE NIDD.

#### I



THE little market-town of Pateley Bridge, though not particularly beautiful or interesting in itself, is an admirable centre-point from which to explore that part of the valley of the Nidd which is usually called Nidderdale, and which may be said to extend from Dacre Banks to the source of the river near Great Whernside. Nidderdale proper differs materially in its characteristics from the romantic valley lying between Pateley Bridge and Knaresborough and the flat lands stretching from Knaresborough to the Ouse. Beyond Pateley Bridge the surroundings of the Nidd are wild and impressive to a degree. The river itself is typical of the variety of the scenery which hems it in; at some points it winds peacefully along beneath woods and through broad meadow-lands, at others it dashes over some abrupt fall, or swirls around the huge boulders which form its bed. On either bank of the Nidd, from Pateley Bridge to Angram, the last village in the valley, there is a continuous succession of objects and scenes interesting to the traveller—a romantic glen, an ancient house, a natural cavern of vast extent, or a village notable for some historical association. It is the greatest charm of the Nidd that it is full of variety, and from its junction with the Ouse to its first rising among the hills every mile of its course possesses some distinctive feature of its own. This variety is most apparent in Nidderdale proper—it is as if the river were conscious that the traveller is soon to leave it and were endeavouring to make itself most attractive at the moment of parting.

Pateley Bridge is one of those towns which have but one street. Here the street rises from the bridge and climbs the hillside, and is literally in accordance with its name—High Street. Like all other towns of one street, there are minor streets, or lanes, in the place, but the High Street really forms the town. Beneath it, doubtless, lie the remains of a Roman road which crossed the Nidd at this point and went northwards towards Ripon and the Durham border. In the Domesday Survey, Pateley Bridge is referred to under the name of Kenaresforde or Neresford, and the first mention of its present name is not found until Norman times, though it appears to have been given to the place long before the Conquest. It is said by most authorities to be derived from *pate* or *pait*, a badger, and *ley*, a field, just as that of its neighbour, Beverley, across the river, is derived from *beofer*, a beaver, and the same termination—though, on the other hand, other authorities say that it comes from *ber*, water, and *ley*, and signifies what it often is, a flooded place. At the time of the Domesday Survey Gospatric had half a carucate of land in Neresford, and it was waste. The Archbishops of York had land in the parish, too, but soon after the Conquest almost the whole of this part of Nidderdale came into the possession of Roger de Mowbray, and it was no doubt in his time that the first bridge was built at Pateley. Whether this was the bridge of timber which Leland saw here when he visited these parts or not, there is no doubt that the first bridge was a wooden structure, and was erected at the place where the ford had been. During the fourteenth century the old church of Pateley Bridge was erected as a chapel-of-ease to St. Wilfrid's of Ripon, in which parish the



town was then situate. It was dedicated to the Blessed Virgin, and served the inhabitants until 1826, when the new church of St. Cuthbert was erected. The old church is the most interesting object in Pateley Bridge; it stands on an eminence outside the town, and forms a worthy memorial



of the past, and its ruinous condition adds not a little to its picturesqueness. The new church is rather plain than picturesque, and has few matters of interest in it save an ancient bell, probably of fifteenth-century work, which was brought from the old church, and bears the inscription *Sancte Petre Ora Pro Nobis*, between each word of which appears the sacred monogram enclosed in a shield under two crowns. There are some curious entries in the parish registers, which date from 1552, and amongst them is a recipe or prescription for the relief of folk suffering from the bite of a mad dog. There is an object of interest in the Methodist Chapel of Pateley Bridge in the shape of an ancient canopied pulpit, from which John Wesley preached during a visit to the town in 1782.

The only day in the week wherein Pateley Bridge shows any considerable signs of life is Saturday, when the weekly market is held. The first market-charter was granted to William de Melton, Archbishop of York, by Edward II., in 1319, and gave permission to him and his successors for ever to hold one market every week on Tuesday, and one annual fair of five days' duration at the time of the Feast of the Nativity of the Blessed Virgin Mary. The market-day was subsequently changed to Saturday, and there are now

fairs on the eves of Easter, Whitsuntide, and Christmas. The great event of the year, however, in this corner of the county, is the great feast of September, which is locally known as the Netherdale Rant, and appears to be extended to the liking of the inhabitants, seeing that it begins at Pateley Bridge and moves up the valley day after day until the rustic appetite for merry-making is satisfied. During feasts, fairs, and Saturday markets the bridge is the favourite meeting and lingering place of the folk who flock into the town. This bridge is, indeed, the principal object of practical interest at Pateley, and it is somewhat curious that there are no records of its first erection nor of the pulling down of the bridge of timber which Leland saw here. There are entries in the Session Rolls of the West Riding which show that between 1647 and 1675 the sum of £55 was expended on its repair, and this would seem to prove that it replaced the timber bridge about the middle of the sixteenth century. It is now a fine, solidly built structure of three arches, and has more than once withstood the violence of the floods which at times sweep along Nidderdale with impetuous force.

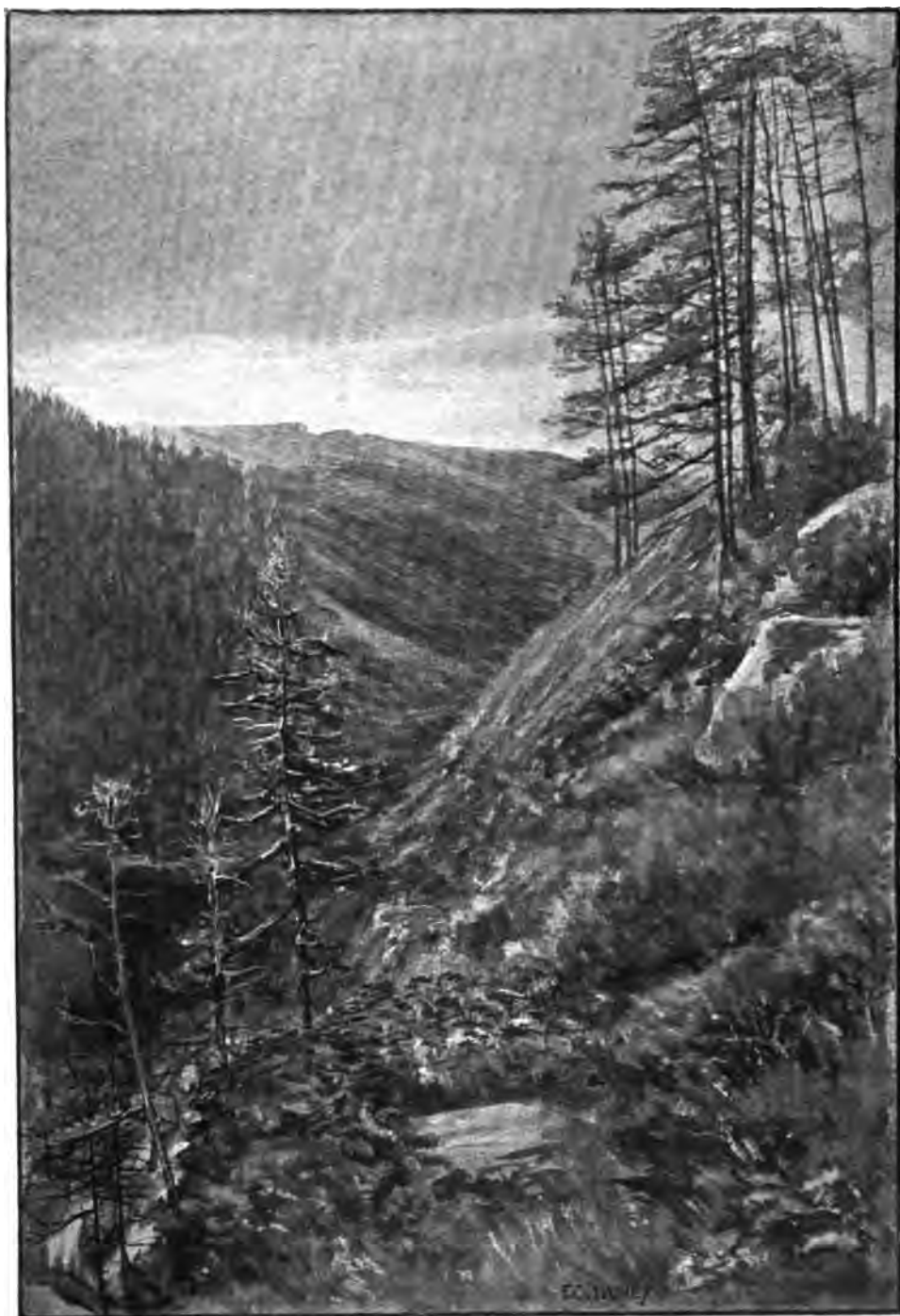
On the opposite side of the river from Pateley Bridge the traveller will find some exceedingly interesting country in the immediate neighbourhood of Bewerley. Soon after the Domesday Survey the manor of Bewerley belonged to Roger de Mowbray, and it was given by one of his successors to the abbot and monks of Fountains, who appear to have derived substantial benefits from its possession. After the suppression of the monasteries it passed into the hands of the Benson family, and from them to the Armytages, and finally in 1674 to the Yorkes, who still hold it. There is a fine hall



*Bewerley*

here, the towers of which are embattled, but the greater part of it is modern, and dates from 1826. In its grounds, however, is an ancient chapel, which from an inscription upon its walls appears to have been built by Marmaduke Huby, who was Abbot of Fountains from 1494 to 1526. Attached to this chapel is a lodging for the abbots, who seem to have stayed here on more than one occasion. There is another house of much interest in this village called the Tudor House, which is chiefly remarkable for its fine stone porch and mullioned windows, and for the oak panelling and ornamented ceilings of its interior. In this neighbourhood, too, the traveller will find a curious ruin known as Yorke's Folly, which was built some generations ago under the direction of a member of the Yorke family by workmen temporarily released from other employment. This ruin stands on the summit of Guy's Cliff, a romantic mass of rock which rises nearly 700 feet above the valley. Here there are some curiously shaped masses of stone, bearing distinctive names, as the Saw Horse, the Giant's Chair, and the like, and close by is a diminutive lake, called Guy's Cliff Tarn. There is another rock in the neighbourhood of Guy's Cliff known as the Crocodile Rock, from an opening in which there is a fine view of the windings of the Nidd from beyond Angram to Pateley Bridge. The most delightful scenery in the immediate surroundings of Bewerley, however, is found in the beautiful woods and defiles of Ravensgill, which are full of charm at all times of the year, but especially striking in autumn, when the reds, crimsons, greens, and yellows of the trees combine to make a wonderful display of rich colour.

On the west side of the Nidd numerous gills, or becks, or streamlets drain the high land lying between Nidderdale and Wharfedale ere they flow into the former valley. At the head of one of these, Riddings Gill, stands Gowthwaite Hall, one of the most remarkable and interesting houses along the river side. It was the original seat of the Yorkes, who resided here for some generations before building Bewerley Hall, but it had previously been the site of an older house occupied by the Golthwaites, who established themselves here soon after the Norman Conquest. Gowthwaite Hall is an antique Elizabethan mansion, now divided into smaller dwellings, and its mullioned and latticed windows, squat roofs and gables, and old yew-trees in its garden, combine to make it a charming old-world picture. Its interior is even more quaint than the exterior, and abounds in old oak panelling, staircases, and beams. In one of the rooms was acted the play which caused Sir John Yorke to be brought before the Star Chamber. The Yorkes were adherents of the old religion at the time of the Reformation, and here they or their servants once performed a masque which was said to be an insult to the newly established faith, with the result that Sir John Yorke was fined in such a sum that he was obliged to sell his estates to clear himself. There is a further interest attaching to Gowthwaite Hall in the fact that Eugene Aram here commenced his career as tutor and school-master. The house at that time was occupied by Richard Craven, who



RAVENS GILL

employed Aram as tutor to his son William, afterwards famous for his scholarship and the extent of his charities. William Craven was born in 1730, and after receiving his first instruction from Eugene Aram was sent to Sedbergh School, and subsequently to St. John's College, Cambridge. He was professor of Arabic at Cambridge in 1770, and master of his college in 1789, and at his death he left considerable sums of money to various Nidderdale charities, as well as large legacies to his University. Although there is no doubt that Eugene Aram was his first tutor, it would be interesting to know what he actually learned from him, for he was only four years old when Aram left Gowthwaite for Knaresborough.

There are further associations with the hero of Lord Lytton's romantic novel at Ramsgill, the next village along the west bank of the Nidd. Here Eugene Aram was born in 1704, in a thatched cottage which was pulled down some years ago. According to his own account of himself he was descended from the lords of Eyrarn, or Aryarn, or Eryholme, on Teeside, some of whom were High Sheriffs of Yorkshire in their time. Ramsgill, however, has other associations and attractions than those given it by Eugene Aram. Although its church is modern, dating only from 1842, there is in the churchyard the eastern gable of an ancient chapel which belonged to the monks of Byland, who also had a grange here. On the opposite side of the river there is another grange, Bowthwaite, which was in possession of the abbot and monks of Fountains at the time of the Dissolution. Behind Bowthwaite Grange lies a ravine named Helks Gill, which is remarkable for the steepness of its banks, and for its possession of that very rare tree, the juniper. Near Bowthwaite the monks of Fountains had two other granges, which are now farmsteads, under the joint name of Calval Houses. They were held at the Dissolution by two members of the Benson family, William and Miles, and appear to have been of considerable value. These houses and Bowthwaite Grange were afterwards in possession of the Inmans, a well-known Nidderdale family, one of whom, Robert Inman, gained the name of Bold Robin of Bowthwaite by the following remarkable display of strength and bravery:—He had on one occasion retired to rest after returning from a journey undertaken for the purpose of collecting several considerable sums of money, and was aroused from his slumbers by certain sounds of a suspicious nature. He rose from his bed and found that thieves had broken into his house, whereupon he seized a weapon and prepared to defend himself and his property. He was presently attacked by four sturdy ruffians, but he laid about him with such vigour and determination that in a short space of time he found himself the only living man of the five, for the four would-be thieves lay dead in various parts of the house. It is said that the weapon—the exact nature of which is not specified by the local chroniclers—with which this terrible feat was accomplished was in possession of the family until the beginning of the present century.





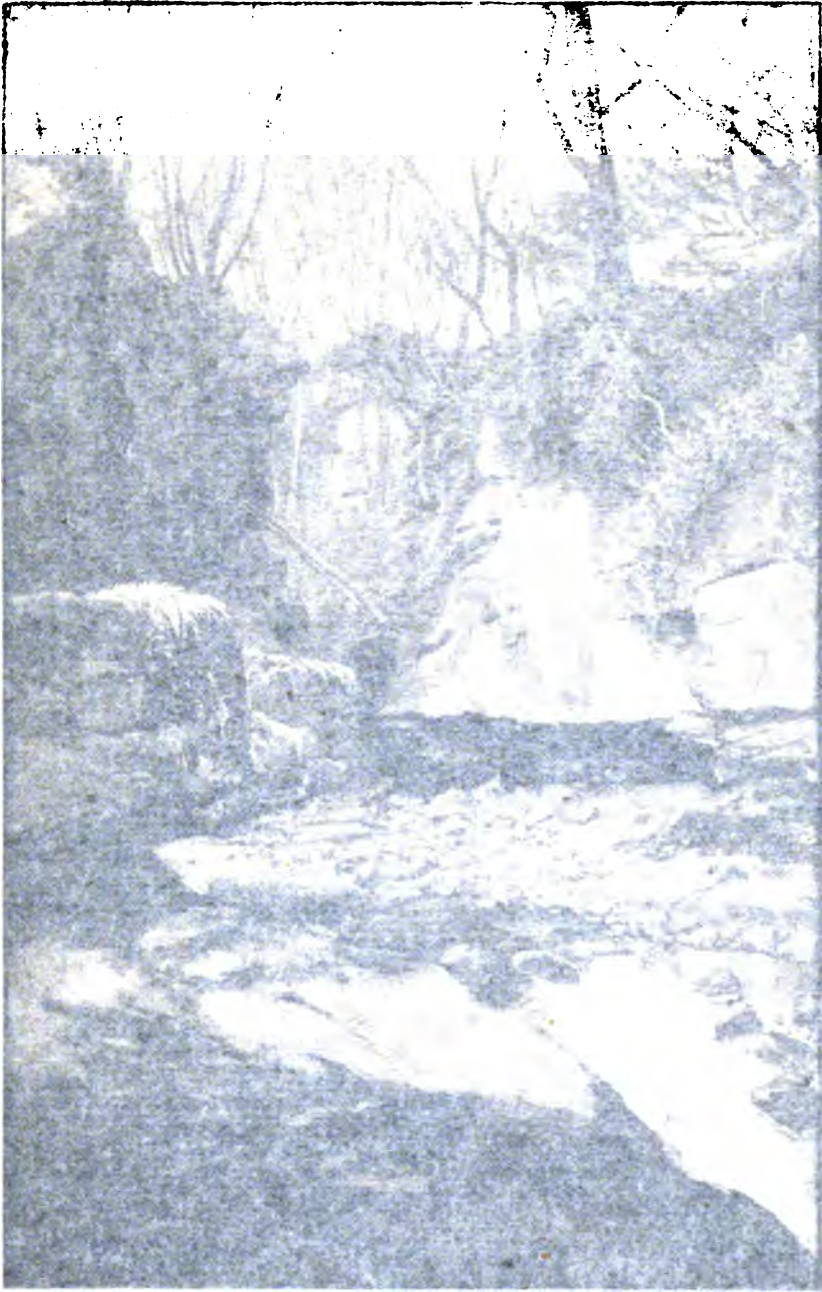


MIDDLESMOOR

## II

At Middlesmoor the head of Nidderdale is almost reached. Few villages are more romantically situated than this, and few can afford such far-reaching prospects of hill and valley as may be had from its churchyard. It is situated on the slope of a great heather-clad fell, crowned with a plateau-like summit, which divides the course of the Nidd from the remarkable gorge of How Stean Beck. Leland mentions Middlesmoor in his account of this neighbourhood, and says that he had heard that it was in the parish of Kirkby Malzeard. The church here is thought to have had a very early origin, but there are no particulars of it prior to 1484, when the Bishop of Dromore consecrated it for the celebration of the sacraments and for burials, which would seem to imply that it had previously been but a chapel-of-ease for preaching and catechising. Most of the ancient features of the church were destroyed at its complete restoration in 1865, but it still contains a massive font, which is probably of late Norman work. One of the features of the churchyard of Middlesmoor is the numerous instances of longevity amongst the inhabitants of the parish—octogenarians and nonagenarians appear to be as plentiful hereabouts as septuagenarians are in other places.

The gorge of How Stean Beck, which lies to the west of Middlesmoor, is one of the most romantic and remarkable defiles or ravines in the county.



*Flow Mean*

## MONSIEUR YOUNG

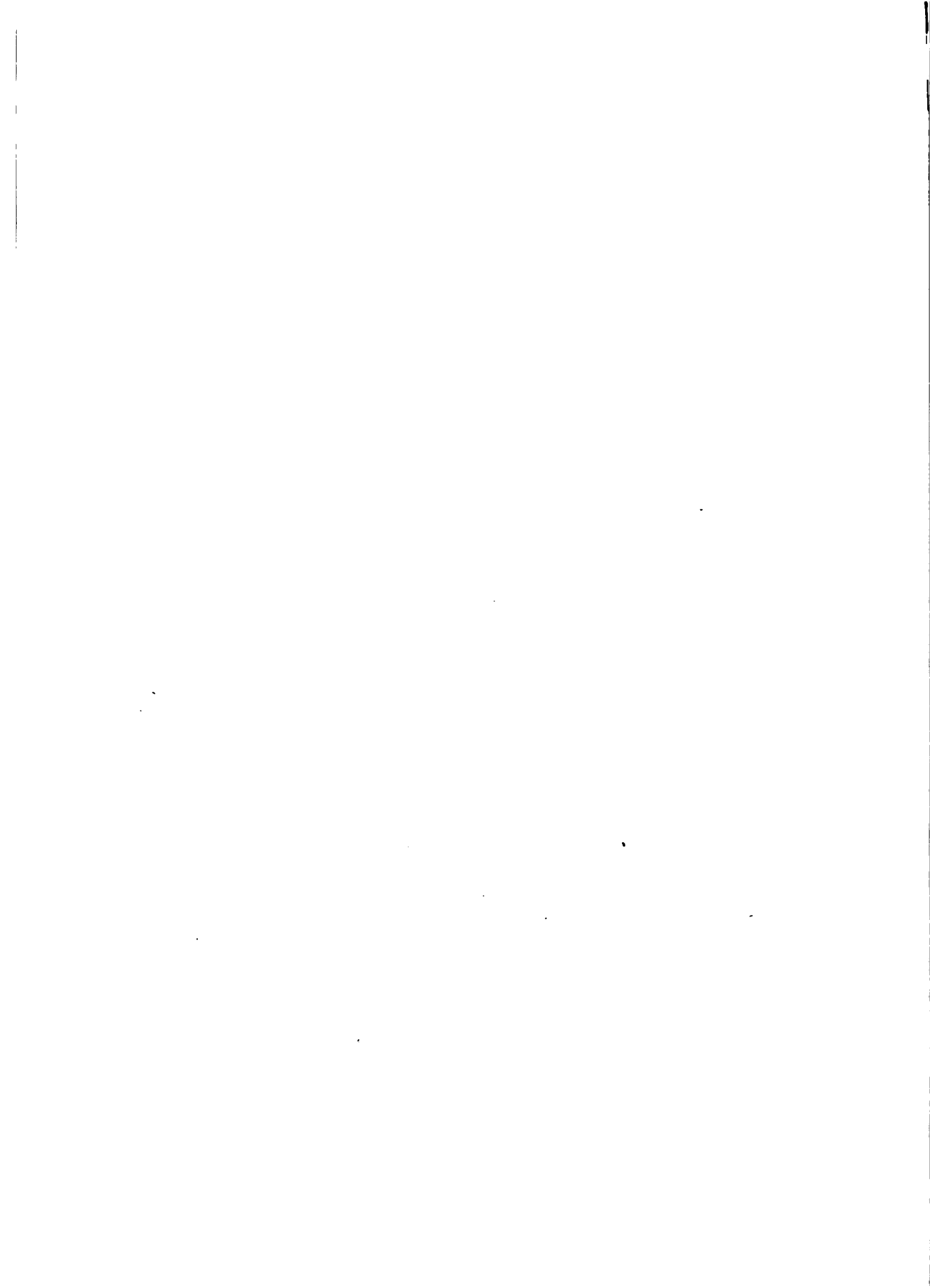


The building is a large, multi-story structure with a prominent central tower or spire. It appears to be a church or a significant institutional building. The architecture is somewhat classical, with multiple windows and a solid facade. The image is somewhat faded and has a grainy texture, typical of an old newspaper clipping.

The gorge of How Steam Park, which lies to the north of the most romantic of the park the defiles of



*How Steep*





THE NIDD VALLEY FROM MIDDLESMOOR CHURCH

At first its scenery is full of charm and prettiness, but afterwards it becomes awful and impressive, and at last is almost terrifying in its wildness and grandeur. From the head of the great perpendicular walls of limestone marble, in the niches and crannies of which grow innumerable varieties of moss and fern, the eye looks down upon a fierce torrent rushing far below, in some places at a depth of 80 feet. The rift in which the beck flows seems to have been formed by an earthquake, so sharply and suddenly defined are its lines. It is in most places from 6 to 10 feet in width, and here and there so much less that it looks as though a single stride would carry the traveller across it. Into the deepest parts of this gorge the light of the sun never enters, and the continual gloom combines with the roaring of the water and the frowning aspect of the rocks to produce a most impressive effect. The stream which flows through How Stean takes its rise on the slopes of Riggs Moor, lying between Great Whernside (2310 feet), and Mewpha (1888 feet), and in its course of about four miles is carried over two falls, Park Foss and Cliff Foss, which are respectively 16 and 6 feet deep, and cuts its way through various succeeding measures of millstone grit, shales, and sandstones, to the lower scar limestone of which the rocks which enclose it at How Stean are composed. It is in its way a unique natural curiosity, and can boast an advantage over the greater gorges of Colorado in the fact that it is luxuriantly wooded and richly supplied with the most delicate vegetation.

In one of the wildest parts of How Stean there is a natural cave called Tom Taylor's Chamber—a name given to one of the caverns at Brimham Rocks. This place is supposed to have sheltered an outlaw at some period or other, but it is chiefly remarkable as being the scene of a very remarkable discovery. Here in 1868 two boys of the parish of Middlesmoor who had explored the cavern in their playtime found a number of Roman coins, most of which had lain under water until they had become quite thin and in some instances obliterated. Mr. Speight gives a very careful and scholarly account of this discovery in his work on "Nidderdale," from which it appears that most of the coins were of silver, and of a date anterior to the time of Septimius Severus (A.D. 197–211). It seems probable that these coins were in circulation amongst the Roman workers of the lead mines in the neighbourhood of Greenhow Hill and Dacre, and that they were hidden in Tom Taylor's Chamber about the beginning of the fifth century. Not far away from this cavern there is a narrow slit in a wall of rock which gives admittance to a subterranean passage known as Eglin's Hole, which is said to extend into the hillside in the direction of Middlesmoor for a considerable distance—nearly two miles, according to some writers—and which contains some remarkable stalactites and petrifications.

In following the course of the Nidd northward from the valley between Middlesmoor and Lofthouse, the traveller will be suddenly astounded to find that the river is no longer to be seen, and that nothing but a dry bed of stones, rocks, and boulders has been left in its place. This curious phenomenon invariably excites much wonder and surprise, and the explanation is no less surprising. From the first sources of the Nidd on the slopes of Great Whernside, the river flows on past Angram and Woodale to the foot of Beggarmote Scar, where a considerable quantity of its waters disappears within a fissure known as Manchester Hole, from whence they run underground to a point near Middlesmoor. When the stream runs high, however, its waters rush forward past Manchester Hole until they reach the famous cavern called Goyden Pot, into which they pour themselves entirely, save in very wet weather, when some portion of them trickles along the usually dry bed. Goyden Pot, which is situated just beyond the hamlet of Limley, is almost as remarkable a natural curiosity as How Stean. It is entered by a species of arch, of natural construction, which is about 9 feet in height and 12 feet in width, and which grows narrower as it proceeds into the interior. From this arch there is a passage or tunnel at least two miles long, through which the Nidd takes its way in darkness. It is impossible to explore the whole of this passage, but frequent explorations of the immense cavern near the entrance have been made. About a hundred yards from the arch previously mentioned there is a sudden drop of 20 feet to the floor of the cavern, which has the appearance of a huge dome. From this cavern the Nidd proceeds underground, increasing in volume by the addition of numerous subterranean



HOW STEAN



streams and rivulets, until it emerges between Lofthouse and Middlesmoor. The underground passage follows the line of the dry river-bed, and at one point, near Thorp Farm, the flowing of the water can be distinctly heard above-ground. Mr. Speight relates that during the great floods of October 1892 he visited this part of Nidderdale and found the course of the underground current unmistakably evident beneath the buildings at the end of the village. Indeed, it was then so near the surface that it could be seen boiling up through the fire-grate in the dwelling-room of one of the houses. These curious underground cavities and passages seem to be not uncommon in this district. Almost close to the junction of Blayshaw Beck with the Nidd, a considerable portion of the waters of the latter are suddenly swallowed up by a fissure in the limestone rock. An attempt to explore this cavity was made in 1888. The explorers descended by ropes to a depth of 30 feet, when they found themselves in a dome-shaped cavern full of very fine stalactites. On the south side of this cavern was a small passage through which the subterranean stream flowed, and on passing through this the explorers found a larger channel, the walls of which, however, contracted to an impassable narrowness. The water swallowed by this fissure emerges again at a point situate about 250 yards from the place of its disappearance.

The last stretches of the Nidd are exceedingly wild, lonely, and almost desolate, for there are few houses, and the traveller might walk for miles without encountering a human face. On all sides rise the hills and moors, and the river comes tumbling down from great elevations. It is wonderful that men should ever have settled in these solitudes, yet there are houses here and there, and most of them are of ancient foundation. At Woodale there is a house bearing date 1687; Newhouses is, despite its name, an old settlement where in mediæval days the monks of Fountains had a dairy-farm; at Haden Carr there are still further associations with Eugene Aram in the fact that from one of the farmhouses there came one of his pupils, George Horner, sometime Deputy-Paymaster of the Forces. All around Angram, the last house in the dale, the scenery increases in wildness and grandeur. Great hills surround the infant Nidd on every side—Rain Stang (1400 feet), Great Haw (1786 feet), Masham Moor (1562 feet), Little Whernside (1984 feet), all tower above in awful solitude. But most impressive of all the hills and fells which surround it is the vast bow-shaped bulk of Great Whernside, on whose summit the snows of winter remain until spring is melting to summer, and from whose side the river springs at a point 2000 feet above sea-level.

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## CHAPTER XL

### Aldborough and Boroughbridge

CHARACTER AND COURSE OF THE URE—ALDBOROUGH: THE ISEUR OF THE BRIGANTES, THE ISURIUM OF THE ROMANS—CARTISMANDUA AND THE BRIGANTES—TRACES AND REMAINS OF THE ROMAN OCCUPATION—ALDBOROUGH IN MODERN TIMES—BOROUGHBRIDGE—BATTLE OF BOROUGHBRIDGE, 1322—THE RIVER TRADE OF BOROUGHBRIDGE IN THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY—THE GREAT NORTH ROAD AND ITS TRAFFIC—THE BOROUGHBRIDGE FAIRS—MODERN BOROUGHBRIDGE—THE DEVIL'S ARROWS—NEWBY HALL.



THE river Ure rises from a spring near the summit of Abbotside Common, in the wild country of the Westmorland border, and flows through some of the most remarkable scenery in Yorkshire to its junction with the Ouse at Swale Nab. Its first rising is at an elevation of over 2000 feet above sea-level, but in the first three miles of its course it falls quite 1000 feet. At first a mere rivulet, it speedily gains in bulk and force by its reception of numerous mountain rills and torrents, and by the time it flows into the beautiful valley of Wensleydale it has assumed all the characteristics of an important river. Between Hawes and Wensley it passes through a succession of charming and picturesque scenes. Into Wensleydale itself a number of smaller dales open, and on the becks or gills which run through them the lover of torrents and cascades will find some of the most strikingly situated scenes in England, varying from the magnificence of Hardraw Force, 99 feet in height, to Bow Force, 12 feet. On the Ure itself, at Aysgarth, there are some magnificent rapids over which the river pours its waters with astonishing strength. The peaceful aspect of Wensleydale adds to the effect of the river's tumultuous rushings at this point; no other Yorkshire valley is more suggestive of the quietude of pastoral life than this. The presence of the ruined castles of Bolton and Middleham, once the formidable strongholds of great mediæval families, serves to accentuate rather than to lessen this pastoral effect. Even more peaceful and secluded

regions may be reached by turning aside from Wensleydale into the smaller valleys of Bishopdale and Coverdale, which seem to lie quite out of the world, and are far removed from any vestige of modern life. The small towns situate along these stretches of the Ure are full of interest and picturesqueness. At Leyburn, or Masham, or Tanfield the lover of the beautiful might linger for days finding in his immediate surroundings a good and substantial reason for his tardiness. As the Ure draws nearer to its junction with the Ouse its surroundings increase in interest. It flows through the ancient cathedral city of Ripon, southward of which lies Fountains Abbey and its picturesque environment, and thus intersects a corner of the county particularly rich in historical association. These associations deepen as the river finishes its course of sixty-two miles. Its last stretches are through a country full of memorials of a long-dead age, for Aldborough, the last of its towns or villages, was a Brigantian city long before the Romans came into the north of England. From its source to its confluence the Ure, then, is one of the most interesting and remarkable of Yorkshire rivers. In exploring its surroundings, the traveller will never lack an incentive to further journeyings. The picturesqueness of its character begins at the point where it and the Swale pour themselves into the Ouse, and increases with every step which is taken towards its source.

## I

There is no place of its size in Yorkshire one-half so remarkable or interesting as Aldborough. At first impressions the traveller might well be excused for declaring that he saw little more in it or about it than a man may see in many another Yorkshire village—a certain number of more or less picturesque houses and cottages clustering about a church, with some evidences of a respectable antiquity and some advantages of situation, but nothing further to show that it was a place of importance when the great towns and cities of the county were unheard-of and not even existent. But in point of age as a centre of population, Aldborough may justly lay claim to rank with any place in the county—even if York can make out her title to rank as the foundation of a great-grandson of Æneas. While much of its history is involved in the mists which encircle the doings of bygone ages, there is no doubt that it was the *Isure* or *Iseur* of the Brigantes, and the *Isurium* of the Romans. Here, long before the Romans came into this country, the Brigantian kings seem to have kept such state as suited them. There is nothing to show of what form or aspect the Brigantian town or city of Iseur was, but there seems every reason to believe that during the ages in which the Brigantes were the dominant power in Yorkshire, Lancashire, Westmorland, Cumberland, and Durham, it was the capital of their kings and the seat of administration and justice. According to Tacitus, Iseur about the beginning of the first century was

the seat of Venutius, a Brigantian king, who was usurped from power by his wife, Cartismandua, and her paramour, Volucatus, and for some time the two usurpers held the city and indulged in a series of riots and debauches. Being in their turn driven out by Venutius and his allies, they sought



help from the Romans, then rapidly extending their operations in this country, and finding it readily afforded, reassumed possession of Iseur, from whence Venutius retreated, with those faithful to him, in the hope of obtaining help from other native tribes. It was about this time that Caractacus, or Caradoc, king of the Silures, who had resisted the Roman advance for a period of several years, was obliged to flee northward in the hope of finding succour or protection. He fell into the hands of Cartismandua, and was immediately delivered to the Romans, probably at Iseur itself. Soon after this Venutius gathered together the faithful Brigantes and the remnants of the Silures, and made a last stand against the Romans under Petilius Cerealis, by whom he was defeated. It would appear from the account which Tacitus supplies of these events that the final subjugation of the Brigantes was brought about by Julius Agricola in the year 79, and that he immediately set about the construction of a new city on the site of the old one, the name *Iseur* (which is supposed by most authorities to have been derived from *Isis*, the worship of whom had been introduced into

Britain at an early period, and *Ure*, the river made sacred to her), being changed into *Isurium*.

Although historical evidences on the subject are fragmentary and doubtful, there seems strong reason for believing that *Isurium* and *Eboracum* were built about the same time, and that while the latter was regarded as a strong military city, the former was occupied as something of a pleasure resort, though, in accordance with the arrangements of all Roman settlements, it was properly fortified and defended. Some writers are of the opinion that *Agricola* made his headquarters at *Isurium* for a period anterior to the building of *Eboracum*, and that after the Romans had firmly settled themselves in the latter city, the former was devoted to purposes of a less exacting nature than those which would dominate the social life of a great military port. So far as has been proved by the numerous excavations carried out at *Aldbrough* during the past century, *Isurium* corresponded to Roman *York* in the fact that it was in the form of a parallelogram, enclosing an area of at least sixty acres. Mr. Smith, who published an interesting account of the Roman remains here in 1852, was of opinion that the angles of the parallelogram were cut off, and there does not seem to be any evidence that the walls had corner towers, as was the case at *York*. According to generally recognised opinions on the subject, the present church of *Aldbrough* is on the exact centre of the site of *Isurium*, while the *Hall* occupies that of the east, and the *Manor* that of the west gate. The walls, which extended about 2000 feet by 1300 feet, were four yards in thickness, and were founded on large pebbles laid on a bed of blue clay. About a hundred years ago the foundation of the wall on the side nearest *Boroughbridge* was opened for the purpose of procuring stone. At this point it was discovered to be quite five yards in thickness, and its depth was of a similar measurement. On opening it there were first revealed layers of red gritstone in broken and irregular pieces, mixed with sand and lime, to the depth of seven feet, after which came layers of pebbles bedded in blue clay to a depth of eight feet, this last course resting on a bed of sand. During this excavation there were discovered several interesting remains, amongst them being a small effigy of the head of a cow, in brass, which was taken to be symbolical of the goddess *Isis*, some horns of deer, evidently dissevered by a fine-edged instrument, several querns or stone hand-mills, and various broken pieces of pottery. Further discoveries were made in 1808, when some workmen engaged in widening the road between *Aldbrough* and *York* came upon eighteen human skeletons, a lachrymatory, and several urns containing ashes and calcined bones, together with a numerous collection of Roman coins. Indeed, there are few ancient towns in the county which have yielded so many relics of interest as *Aldbrough* has during the last hundred years. Roman coins of gold, silver, and brass have been found in large numbers. Those struck during the reign of *Constantine* have

been most abundant, but there are also specimens of the coinage of the reigns of Augustus Cæsar, Claudius, Vespasian, Domitian, Nerva, Trajan, Pertinax, Severus, Maximian, Valerian, Aurelian, Carausius, Alectus, Diocletian, and Constantius. There have also been discovered fragments of earthen vessels ornamented with the figures of birds, beasts, and flowers, and several bearing effigies, with gold chains, polished signets, urns, decorated lamps, fragments of tiles and pottery, and many other matters indisputably connected with the Roman period.

While a good deal of the remarkable collection of antiquities yielded by numerous excavations at Aldborough has been dispersed, the village has fortunately been enabled to retain a large number of these precious objects for the delight and edification of the stranger. Close to the church and village cross the traveller will find a quaint old cottage with a thatched roof, over the doorway of which is a primitive signboard bearing the following very remarkable inscription :—

“ This is the Ancient Manor House,  
And in it you will see  
The Roman Works  
A great Curiosity.”

In a room at the rear of this cottage the traveller will be shown a singularly fine and well-preserved tessellated pavement of genuine Roman work, the colour of which is almost as fresh and vivid as when it was first burnt in. Its pattern is very elaborate, and thousands of pieces must have been used in laying it down. In the museum close by—erected by Mr. A. S. Lawson, lord of the manor of Aldborough, in 1864, for the purpose of providing a fitting receptacle for the relics and curiosities of the place—there are numerous objects of great interest. There are several urns, presumably containing ashes; some portraits of great age, said to be those of certain of the Roman emperors; some specimens of Roman imitation of marble; cases of coins, rings, chains, and pins, of silver and gold; a stone axe and some flint arrow-heads; and certain ancient British remains, including the statuette of a British deity. In the grounds of Aldborough Manor there is a Roman altar, and nearer the museum are the only visible portions of the wall which enclosed Isurium. There is a figure of the god Mercury built into the wall of the church, and this is the only remnant of Roman sculpture left here, saving the small house-ornaments in the museum. In Mr. Smith's *Reliquiæ Isurianæ* he describes a very beautiful sarcophagus which was found here. It was in the form of a shoe, and measured 7 feet 2 inches long and 2 feet 6 inches broad as regards its outward proportions, and 6 feet by 1½ feet as regards its interior. It was made of fine, bright, red clay, and contained the ashes of oak, some fragments of bones, and a few teeth in an excellent state of preservation. When Borough Hill, an eminence near the church, was levelled about the

end of the last century, several specimens of tessellated pavement, bases of pillars, horns and bones of animals, and similar remains were discovered, and there was some evidence that a temple had formerly stood there. During some digging operations in 1770 the foundations of a range of buildings 216 feet in length and 24 feet in breadth were laid bare. The exterior walls of these ran in exactly parallel lines from east to west and had several partitions between them. The walls were of strongly cemented stone, 3 feet in thickness, and 5 feet below the surface. To those skilled in such matters it is not difficult to trace the walls of Isurium. Indeed, traces of this important Roman city have survived until quite modern times. The Romans had a wooden bridge here across the Ure, and some of its piles were standing at the beginning of the eighteenth century, and were used by the local fishermen as convenient balks whereon to hang their nets.

From the evidences which modern research has brought to light there seems to be little doubt that Isurium was a town or city of much luxury, and that at one period of their joint career it possessed buildings and appointments of more grandeur than those of Eboracum. Its houses appear to have been gorgeously decorated and furnished, and its baths such as were loved by the Romans of refinement and wealth. Of its history from the time when the Romans withdrew from England until 1542 there are scarcely any records. It seems probable that it was a place of importance under the Saxon kings, and that it was under their rule that it received its modern name of Eald-burgh, Aldborough. According to some authorities, it was burned by the Saxons and afterwards rebuilt, and again burned by the Danes in the eighth century. That various conflagrations have taken place here is made evident by the character of the soil in which the various remains have been found, which is black and mixed with ashes, and from the marks of fire which appear on the original foundations and pavements. Whether the city was destroyed by Saxons or Danes there is nothing positive to show, but there was no reason why it should escape the wrath of the Conqueror at the time when he ordered the devastation of all the land lying between York and Durham. Whatever its fate in those days all above-ground signs of the former glories of the Roman Isurium seem to have vanished early in the Middle Ages. There was an ancient family here which took its name from the place, but the direct male line failed about two hundred years ago, and the only memorial of them is a monumental brass in the church, which represents a knight in armour, bearing on his shield the arms of Aldborough, and is supposed to be the effigy of Sir William de Aldeburgh, of whom it is recorded that he was summoned to Parliament, as a baron, in 1377.

During the last three or four centuries Aldborough appears to have undergone no remarkable change. Where the Romans lived in luxury and refinement, Yorkshire peasants have been tilling the land for centuries.

"Ther be now large fields fruitful of corn in the very place where the housing of the town was," remarks Leland, "and in these fields yearly be found in ploughing many coins in silver and brass of the Roman stamp. Ther hath been found also sepulchres, aqueducts, tessilated pavements, &c. Ther is an hill on the side of the field wher the old town was, caull'd Stothort, as if it had bene the kepe of a castle." This "hill" is still to be seen in the earthwork at Steedforth, which resembles a crescent in shape, and is 200 feet long by 12 broad, and was probably an outwork used for defensive purposes. Somewhere about the time that Leland was here, Aldborough was deemed of sufficient importance to send representatives to Parliament, and between 1542 and the passing of the Reform Act in 1832, it regularly returned two members to the House of Commons. Bigland, remarking upon this fact in 1812, says that the right of election was not confined to any particular persons or select number of burgesses, but in possession of all taxpayers, and he further mentions that the entire population of the borough then numbered five hundred inhabitants. He also hints that whatever Aldborough may have been in the past it had but the appearance of a village at the commencement of this century. It has still the appearance of a village, but there are few villages in England so full of wonderful memorials and associations of the days of two thousand years ago.

## II

It needs little observation on the part of the traveller to assure himself that in Boroughbridge he is once more in touch with the old days when the Great North Road was the chief highway in the north of England, and the towns along it much more full of life and bustle than they are now. The first aspect of Boroughbridge is suggestive of stage-coaches, post-chaises, runaway lovers speeding towards Gretna Green, and of the delightful inns, quaint and roomy, which have largely disappeared since folk began to travel by steam. From Boroughbridge, going northward, extends one of the finest stretches of the Great North Road, now no longer the busy highway which it used to be, but still full of interest, and never without certain evidences of life. Until the introduction of the railway systems into this part of the county, Boroughbridge was a busy, thriving place, and its streets were for ever re-echoing the rattling of wheels and the blowing of horns as the coaches and carriages set out again after their brief halt. Since all these features of old English life passed away the town has become a sleepy, quiet place, retaining its ancient features, but little of its former activity. It is a larger place than Aldborough, if not of such antiquity, and there is more to see in it than in the modern successor of the old Roman city. Boroughbridge until the sixteenth century was called Burg, and is supposed to have originated about the time when Aldborough was reconstructed and renamed by the Angles. It probably entered upon its subsequent long career as a main



station of the Great North Road when the course of that famous highway was diverted from its former line through Aldborough to its present crossing of the Ure in Boroughbridge itself. This was done soon after the Norman Conquest, and the first bridge was of wood. Houses of entertainment for travellers appear to have been built at Boroughbridge very early in mediæval times, and by 1557 the place was of sufficient importance to be granted a charter of incorporation as a borough, and to return two representatives to the House of Commons. Previous to this the chief event of any great moment in the earlier history of Boroughbridge was the battle which was fought here in 1322 between the insurgent barons led by Thomas, Earl of Lancaster, and the army of Edward II. This engagement is supposed to have been fought on the ground lying between the town and Kirkby Hill, on the north bank of the Ure. About a century ago a numerous collection of relics of the fight, in the shape of swords, broken armour, and human bones, was brought to light near the foot of the bridge. The last stages of the encounter appear to have been fiercely contested on the bridge itself, and there is a local legend to the effect that the Earl of Hereford, one of the principal leaders of the insurgents, was severely wounded by a loyalist who hid himself beneath the bridge and stabbed him through the open timber-work as he passed. The result of this engagement was the complete overthrow of the forces generalled by Thomas of Lancaster, who in company with his principal adherents was executed at Pontefract a few days later.

The most prosperous period in the history of Boroughbridge was undoubtedly that in which it was not only a famous station along one of the most important highroads, but also an inland port of some importance. About 1760 a movement was initiated in favour of making the river Ure navigable from its junction with the Ouse as far as Ripon, and seven years later an Act of Parliament was obtained which gave powers for carrying this scheme into practical effect. The work was entrusted to Smeaton, the celebrated engineer, and was successfully carried out by 1770, when the trade of Boroughbridge received a considerable impetus. Vessels of a tonnage varying from eighty to one hundred, began regular sailings from Hull to Boroughbridge and Ripon, and the former of the last two places became well known as a distributing centre. There was at that time an organised service of trading ships between Hull, London, and the Continental ports, and these vessels penetrated the Humber and the Ouse as far as their size would permit, where they were met by the lighter vessels from the Ure and relieved of their cargoes. Under these conditions of trading Boroughbridge speedily became a very busy place. In the great warehouse by the Ure there were deposited vast stores of merchandise of all descriptions—tin from Cornwall, cloth from Leeds, cotton from Manchester, iron from Staffordshire, fruits and spices from the French and Spanish ports, chests of tea from China, with parcels of silks and bundles of furs, and consignments of wines, spirits, groceries, draperies, and numerous

other commodities. These matters were distributed all over the surrounding district by means of carts and waggons, some of which are said to have been drawn by cattle and even by dogs. The carriers who went out from Boroughbridge into the neighbouring towns and villages, and even into the



wilds of Swaledale and Wensleydale, came back with carts as full as those which they took away. They collected the greater part of the agricultural produce of the villages and farmsteads through which they passed on their return journeys—cheese, eggs, butter, ham, bacon, poultry, and the like. A considerable trade in flax was done between East Yorkshire and this district at that time. The flax was brought from the Humber ports to Boroughbridge and thence conveyed to Knaresborough, where it was duly spun into linen and sent back to Hull for transmission to London. There was also a considerable trade in wood, the boats coming up with foreign timber and going down with English. Large quantities of slate from the Welsh and Cumberland quarries used to be brought here too, and dressed at Boroughbridge after unloading. During this period of its career the town must have presented an appearance of bustle and animation which is quite foreign to it now. It was then quite a usual thing to see the wharf crowded with traffickers. Farmers from the adjacent homesteads brought their corn to the riverside for shipment, and took their carts home again filled with coal or some other commodity ; carriers were continually drawing up with full waggons ; and porters were busily engaged in transferring goods from the

vessels to the shore or from the shore to the vessels. Indeed, so busy was the place at this time that it is said that it was sometimes possible to cross the river by stepping from vessel to vessel, so thickly were the latter crowded together. Many of these light river-craft were built at Boroughbridge, and there were always several new ones on the stocks, and others in dry dock under process of repair.

While the river was thus the scene of much business, there was an equal amount of bustle and animation along the road. Not only did the Great North Road pass through the town, but the bridge which carried it over the Ure was the only one between York and Ripon which was public to folk anxious to travel north or south. Consequently the road was filled with a never-ceasing procession of waggons, pack-horses, stage-coaches, post-chaises, droves of cattle, sheep, horses, private carriages, and mail-coaches, and all the heterogeneous life of the eighteenth century roadside. The stage-waggons were first used in this district about the end of the sixteenth century, and remained in evidence as one of the features of the highway until the introduction of railways. They were very strongly-fashioned conveyances, of great length and breadth, with a tilt and cover over the top, and wheels which were usually a foot in width. The usual team for drawing a stage-waggon consisted of ten horses: the waggoner in charge rode alongside, mounted on a stout pony. These waggons were chiefly used for the conveyance of merchandise, and by the poorer classes, who found it cheaper to travel in this way than to hire horses and carriages. For those with longer purses there was abundance of opportunity to travel luxuriously and rapidly. At Boroughbridge there were numerous inns with large stabling accommodation, and horses and carriages were always in readiness to convey travellers north or south, east or west, at a moment's notice. After the mail-coaches began to run in 1789, the coaching trade of the town increased enormously, and it is calculated that about the beginning of the century, there were at least one hundred and fifty horses in constant requisition in Boroughbridge alone. At that time coaching had reached its highest point of development. The mail-coaches sped along at an average rate of ten miles an hour, and the roads were kept in splendid condition. There was another feature of road-life at Boroughbridge which has almost entirely disappeared. Through the little town, bustling and animated enough then, used to pass great droves of Scotch cattle on their way to the Midlands and the south of England. There were usually hundreds in a drove, and nearly two thousand head have been known to pass through Boroughbridge in a day. The passing of these vast herds brought trade to the blacksmiths, for it was necessary to shoe the cattle after the fashion of horses, and there is record of thirty thousand nails for bullock-shoes being made at Langthorpe, a village just outside Boroughbridge, on the north bank of the river, in one year, and of a blacksmith at the same place earning £6 in one day by shoeing cattle.

Another feature of the old days of the road was the excellent accommodation of the inns. Boroughbridge was liberally provided with inns in its best days, and one of these, the "Crown," still exists, and with its roomy stables affords an excellent example of what the old English wayside hostelry was like. It was originally the family mansion of the Tancreds, who had possessions in Boroughbridge and the district as far back as the twelfth century, and after its conversion into an inn speedily became noted as one of the most comfortable hostelries in the whole length of the Great North Road. It was the custom for travellers of distinction and for families passing from one part of the country to another to break their journeys here in order to avail themselves of the rest which the "Crown" afforded. This house was noted for the excellence of its fare, and also for the possession of a library, which was stocked, says Bigland, with well-chosen books, the number of which, though not large, was amply sufficient for travellers resting at Boroughbridge for a short time.

During its very prosperous days Boroughbridge was noted for its fairs, to which people flocked from all parts of the county and even from beyond its borders. There were fairs here on the 27th and 28th of April for horned cattle and sheep; on the 22nd and 23rd of June for cattle, sheep, and horses; and during the whole of the preceding seven days for hardware, cloth, and small goods; and on the 25th and 26th of October for sheep and cattle. The great fair of the year was that of June, which, beginning immediately after the Feast of St. Barnabas, was known far and wide as Barnaby Fair. Nominally a fair of nine days' duration, it usually lasted for the whole of three weeks and even longer. During its holding the town underwent quite a transformation. For weeks before the fair began special preparations were made for trade by the erection of booths and stalls, and of tents wherein frequenters and chance comers might find lodging when the house accommodation failed. On the commons and in the fields outside the town, wandering folk of all descriptions—gipsies, hawkers, tinkers, fortune-tellers, horse-copers, and ragamuffins—took up their abode. A special service of light vessels, known as Barnaby boats, came up the river with goods and merchandise for the fair, and the amount of trade done was enormous. There was a curious custom here, provided for by charter, which permitted any householder of Boroughbridge to sell liquor on the two principal days of Barnaby Fair, June 22nd and 23rd. Liquor so sold might be consumed on or off the premises so used, and many of the householders availing themselves of the privilege of this charter used to erect a tent or booth in front of their houses, wherein customers might be accommodated. It was customary for all householders who thus transformed themselves into inn-keepers for the time being, to hang a bush or branch of a tree before their front doors as a sign that refreshment could be obtained there, and there are still remaining in Boroughbridge a few of the iron staples in which these bushes were fixed.

When the introduction of the railway system began to revolutionise almost every feature of English life, Boroughbridge was at the height of its prosperity. The coaches were running with speed and regularity, the inns were always filled with customers, and the coachmen, guards, postillions, hostlers, and stable-folk had plenty of occupation. The river trade was just as prosperous; boats were continually loading and unloading at the wharf, and merchandise was being distributed all over the countryside. When the rumours of the new order of things began to gain a hearing, old-fashioned folk found it hard to believe that there was really going to be a great change in the condition of things. But as soon as the railways were introduced the change was noticeable—traffic of road and river gradually shrank, and it became evident that the old days were at an end. The opening of the line from York to Croft Bridge in 1841 drove the last of the coaches off the road, and the picturesqueness of the old methods of travelling was exchanged for the less picturesque but more time-saving advantages of the new. It is scarcely to be conceived nowadays that the exchange of one system for another made an enormous difference to the life and conditions of the old coaching-towns of which Boroughbridge was a fine type. Coachmen and post-boys, hostlers and guards, were left with no employment; horses stood idle in the stalls where once they had waited ready harnessed; the roomy old inns were destitute of custom, and were finally transformed into private houses or split up into tenements, and the broad highways, once so full of life and bustle and animation, became solitary and grass-grown. The disappearance of the mail-coaches was speedily followed by that of the stage-waggons, the owners of which found it impossible to compete against the new-fangled railway system. Their disappearance from Boroughbridge was followed by that of the river-craft, for the railways robbed the river of trade even as they were robbing the roads of traffic. Ere long most of the business of the wharf was gone; the shipbuilding yard was closed, and a complete change had come over the once-animated scene. Few towns could change so wonderfully as Boroughbridge must have done between 1830 and 1840, and there can be little astonishment that its old-fashioned inhabitants looked askance at the new order of things. They had been represented in Parliament by two members since the middle of the sixteenth century—the passing of the Reform Bill of 1832 took away their ancient privilege. They had seen their town assume a flourishing condition and become one of the great distributing centres of the county—the introduction of railways changed it in almost a moment from a busy place to what it now is, an old-fashioned sleepy place where life moves quietly and soberly, save at rare times when fair or market or race-meeting wakes it up once more to some semblance of its former self.

## III

About half a mile south-west of Boroughbridge the traveller will find those very remarkable objects, the Devil's Arrows, of the nature and antiquity of which much discussion has taken place at various times amongst the learned in such matters. These curious relics of a former age are three huge stones, almost pyramidal in shape, which stand in a line running from north to south. The northern stone is 18 feet high and 22 feet in circumference; the central one 22 feet 6 inches high and 18 feet in circumference; the southern 22 feet 4 inches high and of similar circumference to the central one. The weight of these stones is computed at from thirty to thirty-six tons, and the portions in the ground measure from  $4\frac{1}{2}$  feet to  $6\frac{1}{2}$  feet. There was formerly a fourth stone, which was 21 feet in height—one-half of it is preserved in the grounds of Aldborough Manor: the other is part of the foundation of Peggy Bridge at Boroughbridge. Many opinions have been given as to the precise meaning of these stones. The local legend which invariably attends on the presence of any remarkable object is to the effect that the devil formed a strong dislike to Aldborough, and determined to destroy it, first informing Boroughbridge of his intention in the following lines:—

“ Borobrigg keep out of the way  
For Audboro' Town  
I will ding down.”

Having uttered this warning he planted himself firmly on Howe Hill, an eminence near Fountains Abbey, and cast the four huge stones, afterwards known as the Devil's Arrows, in the direction of the doomed city, each missile, however, falling considerably short of its object. As to more serious reasons for their existence and learned explanations of their position, they are more plentiful than conclusive. Leland thought they were Roman trophies or obelisks placed by the side of Watling Street. “A little without the towne of Burrough-bridge,” he remarks, “on the west part of Watling Street, standith four great main stones, wrought above in common by mennes handes.” Camden inclined to the opinion that the stones were factitious, being a composition of sand, lime, and small pebbles cemented together. It seems, however, to be generally considered that the stones are natural blocks of millstone grit, and that they were brought to their present situation from either Brimham or Plumpton. Drake in his *Eboracum* points out that the stone of the Devil's Arrows and the stone found at Plumpton is so exactly alike that no distinction can be found between pieces taken from each place. That the obelisks were erected in their present position by mechanical means has been decisively proved. In 1709 certain excavations were carried out around the base of the centre one. “At first,” says Drake (*Eboracum*, fol. 27–28), “a good soil was found,

about a foot deep, and then a course of stones, rough and of several kinds, but most were large pebbles, laid in a bed of coarse grit and clay; and so for four or five courses underneath one another, round the pyramid, in all probability to keep it upright, nevertheless they all seem to incline a little towards the south-east. Under the stones was a very strong clay, so hard that the spade could not affect it. This was near two yards deep from the surface of the earth; and a little lower was the bottom of the stone resting upon the clay, and was flat. As much of the stone as was within ground, is a little thicker than what appears above, and has the marks of a first dressing upon it." All this, however, does not explain why or for what purpose these obelisks were erected. From the situation of the stones and the distance between them (129 feet from the north to the central, 360 feet from the central to the south), Stukeley imagined them to have

stood on the scene of a great annual festival of the Druids, and to have formed the *metæ* of races similar to those held at the Olympic games. Stillingfleet considered them to be ancient British deities, founding his opinion on the custom of the Phœnicians and Greeks, who used to set up great masses of stone in honour of their gods, and who were in touch with the inhabitants of this country long before the Romans first visited it. Gale, Lister, Hargrove, and Drake firmly asserted their belief that the obelisks were of Roman origin, and argue that this opinion is strengthened by the contiguity of Aldborough. The opinion of modern authorities, however, is that the Devil's Arrows, near which numerous relics of the paleolithic age have been discovered, are the last remnants of a great circle or square of



*The Devil's Arrows*

similar stones, analogous in its origin and character to that of Stonehenge, and erected thousands of years before the coming of the Romans to this country. But whatever the true explanation of the origin and position of these remarkable masses of stone may be, their present appearance and situation is sufficiently striking to make them the object of much wonder and speculation in the minds of all who see them.

From Boroughbridge, a pleasant path along the riverside leads the traveller to the village of Roecliffe, which is distinguished by its little Norman church, and to the ferry-boat which carries passengers across the Ure at a point lying between Westwick and Newby Park. It was here in 1869 that Sir Charles Slingsby, last of the direct line of Slingsbys of Scriven, was drowned in company with several other persons. The meet of the hounds of which he was master had taken place in the morning of the fatal day—February 4th—at Stainley, and the fox had crossed country to Newby Park, where it swam the Ure. Sir Charles Slingsby and some members of the hunt got into the ferry-boat with their horses. On the way across the horses grew restive, and one, a favourite animal named Saltfish, which Sir Charles Slingsby had ridden for many years, jumped out and became entangled in the chain by which the boat was propelled. His owner followed him, and seeing the boat upset by the struggles of the horse, swam off for the shore, but suddenly threw up his arms and went down. One of his companions, Mr. Edward Lloyd, who had been noted at Eton for his prowess as a swimmer, struck out for the bank, and as he neared it was assisted by Mr. William Ingilby and Captain Vyner, but he too sank and was drowned. Mr. Edmund Robinson disappeared as soon as the boat went over, and was never seen alive again. William Orvis, the huntsman, appears to have sunk at once, as he was found next morning with his hunting-whip tightly clasped in his hand. The two ferrymen, Christopher and James Warriner, are supposed to have been struck by the struggling horses, and they too immediately disappeared in the river. Several other occupants of the ferry-boat, Sir George Wombwell, Captain Molyneux, Major Mussinden, Mr. Vyner, and Captain Key were saved, but the only horse safely landed was Saltfish, the cause of the disaster. Sir Charles Slingsby, Mr. Edward Lloyd, and Mr. Edmund Robinson were considered the best riders of the York and Ainsty Hunt, and it was a remarkable coincidence that they were the only three members of it who invariably wore huntsmen's caps.

From the banks of the river, at the Westwick side of the ferry, there is a very fine view of Newby Hall on the opposite bank. This house, one of the principal country seats in Yorkshire, was originally built from designs by Sir Christopher Wren in 1705, and has since been considerably enlarged and improved. The site, which was carefully chosen by Sir Christopher Wren for Sir Edward Blackett, its original proprietor, is exceedingly well placed, and commands a wide-spreading prospect of the country lying



between Ripon and York. Newby Hall and its surroundings have passed through the hands of various proprietors since Sir Christopher Wren built the house. It was first the property of Sir Edward Blackett, then of Mr. Weddell, then of Lord Grantham, and then of the De Grey family, from whom it passed to its present holders, the Vyners. The house is built of red brick, and is enclosed by some of the finest gardens and pleasure-grounds in the county. It contains some very notable art treasures in the shape of pictures and sculptures. There is here a St. Margaret by Caracci; some family portraits by Sir Joshua Reynolds; a St. Francis by Guido; a Boy with a Hawk by Velasquez; and numerous other examples of the work of famous artists. Mr. Weddell, a former owner, made here a sculpture gallery which was formed out of three rooms, those at the extremities being squares, and the middle one a rotunda covered with a dome. This he filled with a fine collection of sculptures and antiques gathered together on the Continent, the most remarkable feature of which was a large sarcophagus of veined marble, grey and white, 9 feet in length, 5 feet in height, and 3 feet in width, with a capacity of over two hundred gallons. It is said that when this large receptacle was first opened it was found to contain the bones of a human skeleton which were enclosed in a sheet of silver. Newby Hall was for some time the residence of Lady Mary Vyner, who erected about twenty-eight years ago a very handsome church at Skelton-cum-Newby, on the edge of the park, as a memorial of her son, Mr. Frederick Grantham Vyner, who was murdered by brigands in Greece in 1870. Mr. Vyner was one of a party of eight travellers who left Athens early in April 1870, with the intention of visiting the site of the battle of Marathon. They were accompanied by a Government convoy, but were attacked and captured by brigands. There were three ladies in the party, and they were permitted by the brigands to return to Athens: the five gentlemen were carried off to the mountains. The brigands demanded a very heavy ransom and a free pardon as the price of freedom for their captives, and for some time negotiations were carried on by Lord Muncaster, one of the party, who passed between Athens and the brigands' camp several times. At last the Greek Government sent out troops against the brigands, with the result that the latter murdered their prisoners, Mr. Vyner being shot at Thebes. The memorial church at Skelton-cum-Newby is dedicated to Christ the Consoler, and is a beautiful specimen of the Early Decorated style of architecture. It is richly ornamented as regards exterior and interior, and occupies a picturesque position between the village of Skelton and Newby Hall. Its corner-stone bears a simple inscription explaining its origin, and is dated May 17th, 1871, a year after Mr. Vyner's death in Greece.

## CHAPTER XLI

### Ripon and its Cathedral

SITUATION AND ASPECT OF RIPON—EARLY HISTORY OF THE CITY—THE TUMULUS AT AILEY HILL—FIRST INCORPORATION OF RIPON—CUSTOM OF THE WAKEMAN'S HORN—SECOND INCORPORATION AND PARLIAMENTARY PRIVILEGES OF RIPON—RIPON AS AN OLD TRADING TOWN—ORIGIN OF THE CATHEDRAL—ST. WILFRID'S ASSOCIATIONS WITH RIPON—HISTORY AND DESCRIPTION OF THE CATHEDRAL—FOUNDATION OF THE BISHOPRIC OF RIPON.

#### I



THE traveller who is aware that Ripon is a cathedral city and the centre of the second most important ecclesiastical jurisdiction in Yorkshire, may be somewhat surprised on approaching it to find that in point of size it is quite a small place, very much smaller in fact than Wakefield, the third and most recently created of the three cathedral cities of the county. Its entire aspect as a centre of population is that of a small market-town, but it possesses a distinction which raises it above all ordinary places in its cathedral, an edifice of great antiquity and beauty, and in the sober quietude of its streets, wherein there is seldom sufficient bustle or business to mar the peaceful air which seems to be naturally associated with the features and environment of an ancient ecclesiastical town. In geographical situation Ripon has many advantages. It stands on high ground which rises between the Ure on the northward, and its tributary, the Skell, on the south, and is surrounded on all sides by picturesque and diversified stretches of country. From whatever point the traveller approaches it, it presents a commanding appearance, the towers and gables of the cathedral standing well above the roofs clustering around its walls, and giving from a little distance an idea of even bolder outline than the greater Minster of York. Once within the market-place, the principal open space of the city, the traveller will receive a thorough impression of the wholly English character of his surroundings. The obelisk in its midst

—which is 90 feet high, and was raised in 1781 by William Aislable, of Studley, who represented Ripon in the House of Commons for sixty years—forms the centre-point of a picture which is still suggestive of old-world fashions, especially on the days on which country folk congregate there. Most of the streets and lanes which lead away from the market-place are narrow and winding, and the general architecture of their buildings is of the antique style, and accordingly eminently picturesque, though like all other old towns it has changed a good deal during the present century. Its principal note is struck, of course, by the cathedral—a note of quiet, grey colour which hangs all about the place, and forms a grateful contrast to the busier aspect of the greater towns and cities of the county. Of the earliest history of Ripon practically nothing is known. It has been considered by some writers to have been of Roman origin, by others of Saxon, by others again of British. That it had a very early existence seems undoubted, though the first reliable historical notices of it only go back to the seventh century. From the discovery of various earthworks and relics it seems highly probable that Ripon was originally a station of the Brigantian Celts, and some of the former, excavated in its immediate neighbourhood, have been recognised by competent authorities as being without doubt of Roman formation. The mere fact that Ripon is within a few miles' distance of Aldborough, the modern successor of the Roman *Isurium*, would seem to show that the Romans must have had some knowledge of it, more especially when its advantageous position is taken into consideration. There seems to be much that is doubtful and even legendary in the first historical accounts of the town. It is commonly held that in 661, Alfrid or Ælfrid, Prince of Deira, gave to Eata, at that time Abbot of Melrose, land in Ripon whereon to build a monastery, and that the latter on completion was filled by a company of Scottish monks, who subsequently quarrelled with Ælfrid on the question of a proper computation of Easter, and were expelled from their new home in consequence. After this, Ælfrid is said to have bestowed the monastery upon Wilfrith, one of the most famous of the early Archbishops of York, who had had a distinguished scholastic career amongst the seats of learning in Italy, and had after his return to England been chiefly employed in imparting knowledge to Ælfrid, by whom he was held in great affection and respect. Wilfrith appears to have taken possession of the monastery founded by Eata, and to have established a body of monks there, but he cannot have spent much time in Ripon at this period, for he was made Archbishop of York in 669, and during the ten years of his rule over the northern province was busily engaged in building the Minster there. But there is no doubt that he also built the first Minster or Abbey Church at Ripon, on a site in close proximity to Eata's monastery, and that it was an edifice of great beauty, largely executed by workmen from Italy, and consecrated in the presence of the great and powerful of the North. Nor is there any doubt that Wilfrith

fell under royal displeasure and was deprived of his Archbishopric and his other ecclesiastical preferments, and it is said that for some time he was exiled. Shortly before his death the Abbey of Ripon was restored to him, and within its shelter he spent some years in peace. He died at Oundle in Northamptonshire, and was buried at Ripon. Of his church and of the monastery founded by Eata there are now no traces remaining, though the conjectural sites of both are pointed out by local cicerones. Some sign of a terrible battle during or immediately after which Ripon was completely destroyed is held by many authorities to be afforded by the tumulus near the east end of the present cathedral, which is known as Ailey, or Illshaw, Hill, and is supposed to have been heaped up over a vast number of dead bodies after a great fight during the ninth century. Some writers hold that this was the battle fought between Osbert and Ella, kings of Northumbria, and Inguar the Dane, in 867, but there seems to be little proof of the contention, though the tumulus has yielded many relics of Danish times. In shape it is of a conical form, its base being 300 yards in circumference, and its sloping height 72 yards. The lower portion of this extensive mound is of natural formation, but the upper part is a mixture of sand, gravel, and human bones, the latter appearing in such vast quantity as to show that hundreds of dead bodies must have been heaped together here at the same time. That Ripon was almost or entirely destroyed about this time seems certain, but the various chronicles relating to it are so vague that it is difficult to arrive at any definite conclusion as to its exact condition previous to the Norman Conquest. William of Malmesbury says that it was so devastated by the Danes in the ninth century that nothing but ruins and ashes betokened its former presence. Other writers say that it was quickly restored after the affair of 867, and was flourishing enough by 886 to be incorporated as a royal borough by Alfred the Great, who appointed as its governing body a *vigillarius*, or Wakeman, twelve elders, and twenty-four assistants. According to Freeman, this

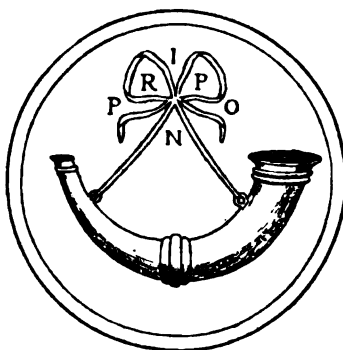


connection of Ripon with Alfred is entirely without foundation, but there is no doubt that the government of the town was carried on by a body composed of the persons just mentioned until the time of James I. The Wakeman of Ripon was also its chief officer, and one of his principal duties was to set a watch every night at nine o'clock, by blowing a horn—a custom which is still carried on. From every owner of a house with two doors the Wakeman received an annual payment of fourpence for performing this duty, from householders with one door, twopence; while, on the other hand, any householder whose premises were robbed after the setting of the watch by the blowing of the horn was entitled to demand pecuniary recompense for the damage done if he could prove that the Wakeman and his assistants were not performing their duty at the time. According to some local historians, this custom has existed for over a thousand years, and it was certainly in use in the fifteenth century. It is still kept up every night in Ripon, as a time-honoured observance, but the tax and compensation are no longer collected or disbursed. The custom is to blow the horn three times before the mayor's house, and once at the market-cross. The horn itself is decorated with silver badges, and with the insignia of the trading companies of the city.

Whether Ripon or not assumed a new period of prosperity immediately after its devastation by the Danes, it appears to have speedily fallen on evil times again, for it was completely razed to the ground by Eldred about 950. It is said that Odo, Archbishop of Canterbury, journeying in this direction shortly afterwards, was so struck by the devastation that he ordered a new minster to be built, and the body or bones of St. Wilfrith removed there. If he caused the building of a new church there is no trace left of it, nor was there when Leland visited the town in the sixteenth century. There was a further devastation and burning in 1069, when the Conqueror wreaked his vengeance on the surrounding district, and at the time of the Domesday Survey Ripon was waste. It seems to have revived again, and to have had some trade during the next two or three centuries, principally owing to the fact that the Archbishops of York made it their residence, and that their presence brought other folk to the town; but it had another season of sore visitation in the reign of Edward II. when the Scottish forces under Bruce marched into Yorkshire and began a series of depredations on such places as seemed worth sacking. Bruce came here in 1323 in pursuit of Edward II. and the English army, and stayed three days, during which he levied a tribute or ransom of a thousand marks on the townsfolk, with many threats as to what would happen if it were not paid. One fourth of this amount was raised and handed over, and the Scots went forward towards York. On their return a little later the balance of the tribute-money was not forthcoming, whereupon Bruce gave orders to sack and pillage, with the result that half the place was soon in flames, and priests and people were murdered ruthlessly. The success of

the English arms during the reign of Edward III. put a stop to the Scottish raids, and Ripon began to flourish again, the Archbishops of York combining with the powerful families of the neighbourhood to restore it to its former prosperity. It was already represented in Parliament by two members, and had a good trade in cloth. In 1405 the plague broke out in London and obliged Henry IV. to remove himself and his court northward. He came to Ripon and stayed there some time, and this no doubt led to further prosperity in the affairs of the Ripon folk. But by the early part of the sixteenth century, when Leland came here, the trade of Ripon seems to have decayed

hath bene on the he remarks, "a great (tenters) for woollen made in the town of ness is sore encreased making almost de-



THE ARMS OF RIPON

In 1569 the mar-witnessed a historic declaration of the re-Rising of the North. celebrated in the Min-was made by order of moreland, and Neville, land, and the banner wrought by Emily Norton, of Rilston, was unfurled by her father, who had brought there his eight sons, and such of his tenantry as could bear arms, to join in the rising. Here a month or two later many of the principal rebel leaders were executed for their treason, and amongst them were several of the leading folk of Ripon. Some other events of a certain importance took place at Ripon during the next century. In 1604 the plague broke out so violently at York that the President of the Council of the North was obliged to remove his court to Ripon and to carry on its business there. In the same year the town was incorporated by a charter obtained from James I. through the influence of Mr. Hugh Ripley. Its new government consisted of a mayor, recorder, twelve aldermen, twenty-four common-council men, a town-clerk, and two serjeants-at-mace. In 1617 James I. came to visit the town which he had thus favoured, and was presented by the corporation with a gilt bowl and a pair of very superior Ripon spurs. Charles I. visited the town twice—in 1633 and 1646—the last time as a prisoner, closely guarded, on his way southward. In 1640 the negotiations between the English and Scottish Commissioners were opened at Ripon, and the house in which the first deliberations took place was in existence and its furniture unchanged until a comparatively recent date. A year previously there was a slight passage of arms here between a body of the Parliamentary forces

a good deal. "There farther side of Skelle," number of tainters cloths, wont to be Ripon, but now idle in the town, and cloth cayed."

ket-place of Ripon sight in the first public volt known as the After mass had been ster, due proclamation Percy, Earl of West-Earl of Northumber-

under Sir Thomas Mauleverer and a body of the Royalist horse under Sir John Mallory, in which the former were entirely successful.

Since the days of the Civil War there has been little of a stirring or important nature in the history of Ripon. In 1657 the Protector granted the inhabitants a charter for the holding of a fortnightly fair, but there are few records to show that it was distinguished as an important trading centre at any period during the past two centuries. Its principal occupations since the Norman Conquest seem to have been in the manufacture of woollen goods and the making of spurs, but the former industry has been discontinued for a long time, and its chief supporters at Ripon are said to have removed their trade from their own town to Halifax at the time of the numerous Scottish raids. The spurs manufactured at Ripon were famous all the world over for their excellence, and the old motto—"As true steel as Ripon rowels"—was taken to signify that those to whom it was applied were men of the truest integrity and highest qualities. Fuller in his book of *Worthies* remarks that the best spurs of England were made at Ripon, a famous town in Yorkshire, and that they were so good that their rowels would strike through a shilling and would break rather than bend. He adds naively that the Yorkshire horses were so good that they either prevented the spurs or answered to them, which he took to be a good sign of thrifty metal. That the spurs manufactured in Ripon were sometimes very costly is evidenced by the fact that those presented to James I. in 1617 were of the value of £5. The making of spurs, however, has followed the manufacture of cloth into oblivion so far as Ripon is concerned, and the modern occupations of its citizens are chiefly in iron, machinery, and leather. There was a considerable increase of trade in Ripon after the Ure was made navigable in 1767, though from its less advantageous situation it was probably never so busy as Boroughbridge, close by. It has always been a more or less important market town for the surrounding agriculturists since its first market charter was obtained. There was a curious custom here which is said to have originated before the Norman Conquest, and was in existence at the beginning of this century, and which provided that the Wakeman should have the toll of corn and grain sold in the market, under the title of *hand-law* or *market sweepings*. There was a confirmation to the corporation of this privilege by charter of Henry VIII. in 1532.

Of the public buildings and institutions in Ripon the Grammar School, the Blue Coat School, and the hospitals are most interesting so far as history and association are concerned. The Grammar School, first founded by Edward VI. in 1546, and incorporated and endowed by Mary and her consort Philip of Spain in 1555, was first housed in St. Agnes Gate and now occupies modern buildings without the city. Here at various times several eminent men, amongst them being Matthew Hutton, Archbishop of Canterbury, Porteous, Bishop of London, and Archdeacon Balguy, received their first education. The Blue Coat School, or Jepson's Hospital,

in Water Skell Gate, was established by one Mr. Zacharias Jepson in 1672. He was born at Ripon and apprenticed to the apothecary's trade at York, where he amassed enough fortune to institute this hospital for twelve poor boys, orphans or the sons of freemen of Ripon, who are clothed in blue, educated and provided for for seven years, and then presented with £5 as a help towards starting in the stern business of life. Here, too, is a Hospital of St. John Baptist, founded in 1109 by Thomas II., Archbishop of York, wherein there is accommodation for two poor women, and which formerly had a chapel which fell into disuse in 1722. In Stammergate there is a hospital for six poor women known as the Sisters of St. Mary Magdalene, which was founded by another Archbishop of York, Thurstan. The ancient chapel of this institution is one of the most notable landmarks of antiquity in Ripon. It has not been used for some time, but is in a good state of preservation, and its stone altar is well worthy of careful examination. The pavement in front of it is of tessellated marble, stone, and brick, elaborately coloured and arranged, and the altar is raised above it by two steps each 7 inches high. The altar itself is 6 ft. 7 in. long, 3 ft. broad, and 2 ft. 8 in. high, and the corner crosses are very plain, though the centre one is obliterated. On each side of the altar is a bracket, and close by is a piscina under a three cusped arch. The inmates of this hospital were formerly accommodated in one edifice; they now live in six cottages and have a new chapel in the immediate neighbourhood of the older one. Then there is another interesting hospital known as St. Anne's, or the *Maison de Dieu*, which is supposed to have been founded for the accommodation of eight poor women by a member of the Neville family about the time of Edward IV. Its chapel was repaired by Sir Solomon Swale in 1644, but has long since fallen into neglect, and is now a ruin with some interesting remains in it. Of the secular buildings of the city the Town Hall is the most important. It occupies a commanding position in the Market Place and was built in 1801 at the expense of Mrs. Allanson, of Studley, whose portrait is preserved in the Assembly Room within. It was designed by Wyatt and is chiefly remarkable for the four Ionic columns which support the pediment of its front. Almost opposite it is the famous obelisk built by Mr. Aislabie. Gent records that the inception of this landmark was originally due to one William Gibson, who was Mayor of Ripon in 1668, and who left £50 to the corporation for the purpose of erecting a cross in the market-place. In 1702, William Aislabie being mayor, the market-place, says Gent, was newly paved and adorned with the desired obelisk, which he declared to be one of the finest in England, and which cost when all was done over £564 sterling—so that Mr. Gibson's original donation was largely supplemented by the generosity of Mr. Aislabie. For some reason or other, however, the inscription on the obelisk which records the fact that the latter was erected by Mr. Aislabie was not placed on it until 1735.



## II

As in the case of almost every cathedral city everything in Ripon is dwarfed and overshadowed by the great church in its midst. From almost every point of the immediate neighbourhood of Ripon its cathedral presents a bold and commanding appearance, but the best coign of vantage from whence to obtain a general view of it is a little way out of the city in the neighbourhood of the bridge which crosses the Ure. The view of its west front, a severe example of the Early English period, is very impressive, and that of the interior of the cathedral, seen from the west door, is scarcely less dignified than that of the interior of York Minster. As a specimen of magnificent architecture and building, and as the repository of numerous tombs and monuments of historic interest and association, none of the greater churches of the county, with the inevitable exception of that of York, are of more note than this.

Of the first beginnings of the cathedral of Ripon there are now no traces remaining. There seems to be no doubt that both Eata and Wilfrith built churches here, and that the one erected by the latter was an edifice of much magnificence. Nothing exists, however, which shows positively where their exact situation was, nor what they were like. It is said that Eata's church stood on a site now marked by some poplar trees growing in a field in Priest's Lane, and that Wilfrith's was to the northward of the present cathedral, but there is no evidence to prove either supposition, any more than that the crypt under the tower known as St. Wilfrith's owes its origin to the great archbishop. There are many legends circling round the name of this saint which are evidently derived from the monkish chronicles. Nothing definite is recorded as to the exact locality of his abbey church or of its history, but stray accounts have come down as to his own doings in respect to both. It is said that he had certain antipathies to the English—so marked indeed that he refused to be consecrated in England, and resorted to French bishops for the rite—and that the greater part of the work of his great church at Ripon was executed by workmen from



Italy. It is also said that the church was consecrated in the presence of all the great folk of Deira in a fashion which seems to have been intended by Wilfrith as a solemn warning to them to respect the new ecclesiastical property, and that after the ceremony there was a feast which lasted for three days and three nights of continuous eating and drinking. It is further narrated that Wilfrith gave a magnificent library to the abbey, the volumes of which were bound in richly ornamented covers, sparkling with jewels and studded with gold, and that amongst them was a copy of the Holy Gospels, which was written in gold on purple vellum, and preserved in a golden casket. Of these precious ecclesiastical relics nothing remains, and though St. Wilfrith's name is connected in various ways with Ripon, there is no absolutely positive relic of him in the city. According to some historians he was buried here, and his bones still sanctify the ground where he performed so many labours for the church; according to others his remains were removed from Ripon to Canterbury by Archbishop Odo's orders. But whatever may be the truth as to Wilfrith's final connection with Ripon, the folk of the place still commemorate him, though not perhaps in such a marked fashion as their forefathers did. Here for centuries it has been the custom for the celebration of the saint's annual feast to begin on the Saturday after Lammas. An effigy of St. Wilfrith is brought into the town, preceded by processional music; the people go forth to meet it, and by general merrymakings and rejoicings show their pleasure at commemorating the return of the great bishop from exile. It may be doubted whether the modern supporters of this ancient custom are fully conversant with even the elementary details of Wilfrith's history, but their joy is none the less on that account.

Not even Leland, visiting Ripon in the early days of the sixteenth century, seems to have been able to gain any very definite knowledge as to the history of the great church which he found there, but he makes one observation which tells as evidence against those who hold that part of the cathedral is of pre-Norman work. "Of all the old monastery of Ripon and the town I saw," he says, "no likely token left after the depopulation of the Danes in that place, but onely the walles of Our Lady Chapel and the (adjacent) crosses. The new minstre is set upon the hill, a faire and big piece of work, the body of the church of very late days made of a great wideness by the tresaur of the church, and help of gentelmen of the country. There be 3 grete old towers with pyramids on them, 2 at the west end, and one in the middle. The common opinion is that Odo, Archbishop of Canterbury, coming into the north part had pitie of the dissolution of Ripon Church, and began or caused a new work to be edified where the minstre now is. Howbeit, the holy church that now standith indubitably was made sins the Conquest." It is therefore evident that in Henry VIII.'s time there were those who had their doubts about the pre-Norman legends relating to the great church of Ripon, in connec-

tion with which there are some ante-Norman legends which do not appear to be based on any very exact foundations. Thus it is commonly, or was commonly, held that Thurstan, Archbishop of York from 1114 to 1140, was the builder of the present cathedral, but Mr. Walbran, a well-informed writer on matters relating to this neighbourhood, has proved that its inception was due to the efforts and generosity of Roger de Pont l'Évêque, who was Archbishop of York from 1154 to 1181, and who gave £1000 out of his own resources towards its erection. As it stands to-day, Ripon cathedral is almost entirely in accordance with Archbishop Roger's original idea of what it should be, though most parts of it have been rebuilt at various times. In the time of Archbishop John the Roman, 1286-1297, indulgences were sold in aid of the building fund of the church of Ripon, but it was not until well into the middle of the next century that the work was completed. The incursion of the Scottish marauders in 1319, when both fabric and woodwork suffered severely from fire, no doubt did much to retard the work. When finished, the church had three spires, or pyramids, as Leland calls them, rising from its three towers. That on the great tower fell in 1660 and did much damage to the roof of the chancel, and accordingly a few years later the spires which surmounted the towers at the west end were taken down. Considerable alterations and improvements were carried out about 1829, and between 1861 and 1869 the entire fabric was thoroughly renovated under the supervision of Sir Gilbert Scott, at a cost of £35,000.

The various statistics as regards the history, architecture, and dimensions of the cathedral church of Ripon may be tabulated as follows:—

#### HISTORICAL DATA.

- 1154-1181. West front, central tower, transept, and part of choir and aisles built by Archbishop Roger.  
 1288-1300. Choir extensively repaired by John the Roman.  
 1319-1340. Choir aisles extended by Archbishop William de Melton.  
 1340-1377. Octagonal spires placed on the three towers.  
 1660-1664. Fall of the central spire, and demolition of western spires.  
 1829-1832. Alteration of various parts of fabric.  
 1861-1869. Complete restoration.

#### MEASUREMENTS.

|                                    |          |                                   |          |
|------------------------------------|----------|-----------------------------------|----------|
| Height of Central Tower . . . . .  | 120 feet | Length of Chapter-House . . . . . | 34½ feet |
| Height of Western Towers . . . . . | 120 "    | Width of Chapter-House . . . . .  | 29 "     |
| Length of Nave . . . . .           | 170 "    | Height of Chapter-House . . . . . | 18½ "    |
| Width of Nave . . . . .            | 87 "     | Length of Vestry . . . . .        | 28 "     |
| Height of Nave . . . . .           | 88 "     | Width of Vestry . . . . .         | 18½ "    |
| Length of Transept . . . . .       | 132 "    | Height of Vestry . . . . .        | 18½ "    |
| Width of Transept . . . . .        | 36 "     | Total length of Church . . . . .  | 270 "    |
| Length of Choir . . . . .          | 132 "    | Length of Crypt . . . . .         | 11¼ "    |
| Width of Choir . . . . .           | 66½ "    | Width of Crypt . . . . .          | 7¼ "     |
| Height of Choir . . . . .          | 79 "     | Height of Crypt . . . . .         | 9¼ "     |

## ARCHITECTURAL FEATURES.

|                                     |                                      |
|-------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| West Front . . . . .                | Early English, plain.                |
| Nave . . . . .                      | Early English to Perpendicular.      |
| Interior of Central Tower . . . . . | Partly Norman, partly Perpendicular. |
| Choir Screen . . . . .              | Perpendicular.                       |
| Choir . . . . .                     | Chiefly Decorated.                   |

The west front of the cathedral as seen from Kirkgate, the street leading from the centre of the city, was erected at the cost of some pious person, whose name is unknown, about the end of the thirteenth century. It is in the form of a gabled compartment, 103 feet in height and 43 feet in width, flanked by two square towers each 120 feet high, and is by general consent acknowledged to be a very fine specimen of the best work of the Early English period. There are three doorways in the west front, each deeply recessed, and above them are two tiers of five lancet windows each. There are three lancet windows in the pediment above. All these windows were restored in accordance with their original design during the renovation of the cathedral by Sir Gilbert Scott in 1861-69. The towers which flank the centre compartment are divided into three storeys each, and each storey is pierced by three lancet lights. Originally surmounted by the octagonal spires of lead and timber which were taken down for the safety of the fabric in 1664, they are now completed by battlemented parapets, at the corners of which are crocketed pinnacles. These were added about a hundred years ago.

A magnificent view of the interior of the cathedral is obtained on entering the west door, the breadth of the nave and side aisles being especially remarkable. As originally built the nave had no side aisles, but from the



fact that the western towers project considerably beyond the line of the original nave it seems probable that Archbishop Roger's plan provided for their addition at a later period. The nave is divided into six bays with windows in the Perpendicular style, and the pillars separating it from its side aisles, which are open to the roof, are singularly graceful. There are no monuments of any particular note amongst the many which are seen in both nave and aisles, but near the font at the west end of the south aisle there is a curious altar-tomb, the inscription on which is now illegible, whereon is depicted a man and a lion amidst trees, the former in the attitude of prayer, the latter in retreat. This is supposed to be the tomb of an Irish prince who died at Ripon. The centre or St. Wilfrith's tower was supported at first by four circular arches, but there are now only two of these left for the admiration of the traveller, two pointed arches having replaced the two original ones which were damaged by lightning in the first half of the fifteenth century. The two circular arches remaining form a contrast to the arches of Pointed fifteenth century work, which are, however, of singular beauty and lightness. Over the tower supported by the piers of these arches originally rose a spire fashioned, like those surmounting the western towers, of wood and lead, and which was blown down by a storm in December 1660. Its fall broke in the arched roof of the choir, damaged the Gothic canopies over the choir-stalls, and did so much general injury to the fabric that the cost of the necessary repairs amounted to over £6000, a considerable portion of which sum was raised on a brief obtained from Charles II., and the remainder by private subscription.

The transepts of the cathedral are in many respects the most interesting part of the entire edifice, as they are still standing precisely as they were built by Archbishop Roger, excepting a portion of the south transept, which is of somewhat later date. Each transept has a doorway of similar architectural features, thus described by Mr. Walbran: "This doorway is very remarkable, having a plain trefoil head rising from a corbel-like projection, placed at the import of the soffit, and is flanked by three receding shafts, whose elegantly foliated capitals assimilate with this Romanesque trefoil, and support an archivolt of bold but undecorated mouldings." The windows of the transepts are in two tiers and are almost semicircular, and the space between them is occupied in the interior by the triforium. To the general visitor the most interesting features of the transepts, however, will be the monuments and chantry chapels, wherein there are numerous remarkable matters. The Markenfield Chapel in the north transept, originally the mortuary-chapel of the Markenfields of Markenfield Hall, near Ripon, was in the seventeenth century appropriated as the burial-place of another ancient family, the Blackets of Newby. It contains very fine altar-tombs in memory of Sir Thomas Markenfield and his wife Dionisia, who lived in the time of Richard II., and of Sir Edward Blacket, Bart., who died in 1718, and whose effigy here appears between those of his wives, who are represented mourn-

ing over him. A large altar-tomb which bears the effigies of another Sir Thomas and Lady Markenfield has been removed from this chapel to a position without. In both transepts there are tombs and monuments in memory of the great families of the surrounding district, Markenfields, Blackets, Kitchenmans, Ridsdales, Wanleys, Oxleys, Nortons, Weddels, Mallories, and Aislabies, many of which are interesting and curious.

At the north corner of the screen which separates the choir from the nave there is a very remarkable stone pulpit of great antiquity, the carving of which is very curious. The screen itself is one of the most beautiful features of the interior

of the cathedral, and is very finely carved in the Perpendicular style, and is 19 feet in height. The choir is divided into six bays, the three nearest the north transept being part of the church as it was left by Archbishop Roger. It contains some very fine work in carved wood, a bishop's throne of modern work, and some notable sedilia and a piscina near the altar. The great east window is 51 feet in height and 35 in width, and has seven lights. It is a very

fine example of the Decorated style, but its original painted glass was destroyed by a troop of Parliamentary soldiers who bivouacked in the church under Sir Thomas Mauleverer in 1643. Some portions of the glass thus wantonly destroyed were gathered together and replaced in the window, and were subsequently removed to another window near the font at the west end of the nave. The present stained glass of the east window was placed in it in 1854 at a cost of £1000 in commemoration of the creation of the modern see of Ripon in 1836.

On the south side of the south aisle of the choir there is an ancient building which is not exactly part of the cathedral, but which forms its vestry and chapter-house, and which is said by some writers to be the original church built by Wilfrith, and by others that erected by Odo, Archbishop of Canterbury, towards the end of the tenth century. There is little



to show that these suppositions are correct, however, for the architecture is Norman rather than Saxon, and the probability is that this building was erected soon after the Conquest. It was the opinion of Mr. Walbran that it formed "the south aisle of a collegiate church, which the devastation that ensued in these parts after the year 1069 demanded from Thomas, Archbishop of York, who was lord of Ripon at the time when the Domesday Survey was made, and died here on the 18th of November 1100. The rest of that structure was doubtless destroyed by Archbishop Rogers when he commenced his basilica, this portion being retained as convenient for the chapter-house and sacristy, the arcade by which it joined its original structure having been closed and flanked by the wall of the choir." There is a small sacristy or treasure-vault opening out of the vestry, wherein are preserved some curious figures in alabaster, discovered during the progress of excavations in the choir, and representing St. Wilfrith, the Resurrection, the Coronation of the Blessed Virgin, and other subjects. Over the vestry and chapter-house is the Lady Loft, supposed to have been superadded during the fourteenth century and now used as a library, the chief treasures of which are some illuminated manuscripts and black-letter books.

Perhaps the most interesting place in or about the cathedral of Ripon, so far as mere matters of a curious nature are concerned, is the crypt under the central tower. The exploration of this and of a certain show-place within its borders is the chief object of desire on the part of most tourists visiting the cathedral. Near the entrance to the choirs there is a trap-door in the pavement which gives access to a short flight of steps, terminating in a narrow passage 45 feet in length, which leads to the crypt, a mere cell in comparison with those of most churches of similar size, seeing that its dimensions are but 9½ feet in height, 7 feet 9 inches in width, and 11 feet in length. There are several niches with semi-circular arches above them in this place, but the notable matter which people are so anxious to see is the opening on the north side which is known as St. Wilfrid's Needle. It is a narrow tunnel made through the vast thickness of the north wall, and on the side nearest the crypt measures 18 inches in height by 13 inches in width. On the farther side the opening is much wider, and there is a passage leading from it by a series of steps to the choir-stalls. The legend centering round this curious orifice is that in other days women upon whose chastity some doubt or reflection had been cast were required to pass through it as a test or ordeal. If they successfully passed through the narrowest part their virtue was proclaimed; if not, they were condemned or left open to grave suspicion. "They pricked their credits," says Fuller in his quaint fashion, "who could not thread the needle." To this day it is no uncommon thing for females who are being shown over the cathedral to express a desire to go through this ancient custom merely out of curiosity, and the stones have long been worn smooth by the rubbing of garments against them.

It is extremely probable that the whole story is purely legendary: the construction of the place seems to point conclusively to its having been used as a confessional, the priest approaching from the steps leading from the choir-stalls, and the penitent from those which connect the crypt with the nave. There is another crypt in the south-east corner of the cathedral from which a large collection of human remains was removed for interment in the precincts in 1865, and which is now only interesting for the sepulchral monuments which it contains.

Long before the modern bishopric of Ripon was founded there had been a Bishop of Ripon, who possibly kept greater ecclesiastical state than his modern successors do. The place was created into an episcopal see, subject to the primacy of the archbishopric of York, in Wilfrith's time, and around its first cathedral church and the monastery which Wilfrith had erected after the Scottish monks departed to their own land there was a good deal of ecclesiastical power and magnificence which the city does not now possess. Æthelstane granted various immunities to it in two charters, one written in Latin, the other in English verse, the chief privilege of which was the right of sanctuary. The boundaries of sanctuary here were marked by eight crosses which enclosed a space extending for a mile all ways from the church. Of these crosses only one, that of Sharow, now remains, and it is in a ruinous condition, but the privilege of sanctuary was claimed so recently as the sixteenth century by a man who had robbed another of his wife and his household goods. When the ancient bishopric fell into desuetude Ripon became a collegiate church of Augustinian Canons, having a dean, six prebendaries, and numerous minor dignitaries and officials, and its governing body held much land and many valuable ecclesiastical preferments. It remained a collegiate church until 1836, when, the archdiocese of York growing too unwieldy in consequence of the great increase of population, it became necessary to form a new diocese. The see of Ripon includes some of the most important towns and cities in the West Riding of Yorkshire. Its first modern bishop was Dr. Longley, formerly headmaster of Harrow School, and its bishop's palace, a fine building in the Tudor style, was erected in 1841.



Sanctuary Cross  
Sharow



## CHAPTER XLII

### Fountains Abbey

APPROACH TO FOUNTAINS ABBEY FROM RIPON—STUDLEY ROYAL AND ITS PARK—SURROUNDINGS AND PRESENT ASPECT OF FOUNTAINS ABBEY—ITS HISTORY FROM 1132 TO 1539—DESCRIPTION OF THE RUINS—FOUNTAINS HALL—MARKENFIELD HALL—SCENERY ALONG THE RIVER SKELL.

#### I



All show-places in Yorkshire probably none are more visited or better known than Fountains Abbey, and few English religious houses are more familiar to most people by acquaintance or repute than it is. As a show-place indeed it can only be said to have one rival, Bolton Priory, for thousands of travellers and tourists flock to Fountains or to Bolton where scores go to Jervaux or Rievaulx. Famous and popular as it is, it would, however, be erroneous to claim for Fountains Abbey that it is in every respect the most attractive of the old homes of religion left in the county. So far as mere picturesqueness and beauty of natural position are concerned it must give place to Bolton, Rievaulx, and Easby, but it enjoys a vast superiority over these three famous ruins in the fact that its remains are in a very fine state of preservation, and that the art which has conspired with nature to give it fitting and suitable surroundings since the days of its mediæval glory have passed has been employed with singular success. Fountains Abbey, as it is nowadays, is indeed a model of what the model show-place should be, and it is little wonder that crowds of folk visit it who probably know nothing and care to know nothing of its history, or of the events which led to the first rising of its walls on the banks of the little river Skell. It is easily reached from the great cities and towns of the West Riding and is almost close to the fashionable watering-place of Harrogate, and it is difficult to imagine the coming of a time when the lover of solitude may visit it and have its beauties all to himself.

Fountains Abbey lies about four miles to the south-west of Ripon, and

the traveller may go there by vehicle or on foot according to his own pleasure. The man who is fond of pedestrianism and who has plenty of leisure time on his hands will do well to proceed from Ripon to Fountains Abbey on foot, since his path will take him through scenes not so easily accessible to the man who rides or drives. At a short distance from the bridge which crosses the stream called the Laver, a little way out of Ripon, there is a footpath on the left of the road which eventually leads into the park at Studley and presently joins the great tree-lined avenue there, from the midst of which, looking back, the traveller will obtain a fine view of the towers and gables of Ripon Cathedral framed in the trees on either side of him. Looking along the drive westward he will see the fine modern church of the Blessed Virgin, built by the Marchioness of Ripon in 1871, in memory of her brother, Mr. Vyner, who was murdered by the Greek brigands, and who is further commemorated by the memorial church at Skelton, erected by his mother, Lady Mary Vyner. The church built by Lady Ripon is one of the finest specimens of modern architecture in the country. It is in the Decorated style and consists of nave, aisles, chancel, tower, and spire, the latter forming a conspicuous landmark all over the surrounding neighbourhood. The ornamentation of the interior of this church is extremely rich and remarkable. Free use has been made of Purbeck, Irish, and Californian marble, of bronze, and of alabaster; the mosaic work in the floor of the chancel was executed by Italian workmen; and the panels of precious stones, the paintings and frescoes on the walls, and the general air of richness about the entire fabric help to make it almost unique in rural churches.

Studley Royal, famous to all Yorkshire folk as the residence of the Marquis of Ripon, is little less known as a great country house than those of Wentworth, Harewood, and Castle Howard. It is not a show-place in the usual sense of the term, for it is not open to general inspection, but a good view of it may be obtained by the traveller as he passes through the park on his way to the lodge, at which he must pay a shilling ere being made free of the glories of Fountains Abbey. The original house was an old manorial residence erected in the fifteenth century, and was taken down, with the exception of a small portion still remaining, during the last century, when the present hall was built. Studley Royal, after being in the hands of the families of Aleman, Le Gras, and Tempest, was formerly closely associated with those of Mallorie and Aislabie, many of whose members are interred within the walls of Ripon Cathedral. One of the former, Sir John Mallorie, Knight, was a staunch adherent of Charles I., and distinguished himself as a Royalist commander during the Civil Wars. From the Mallories Studley Royal passed to the Aislabies, the last of whom in the direct male line, William Aislabie, son of John Aislabie, some time Chancellor of the Exchequer, married Elizabeth, daughter of the Earl of Essex, and was connected with public life in Ripon during the greater part

of the eighteenth century. He purchased the site and ruins of Fountains Abbey from the Messenger family in 1767 for the sum of £18,000. His only son having pre-deceased him the estates passed to his daughter, Mrs. Allanson, and from her to her niece, Miss Lawrence, in 1808. They came into possession of the then head of the Robinson family, Earl de Grey (created Baronet, 1690; Baron Grantham, 1761; Earl de Grey, 1816; Viscount Goderich, 1827; Earl of Ripon, 1833; and Marquis of Ripon, 1871), in 1845 by bequest of Miss Lawrence, one of whose ancestors, a sister of John Aislabie, had married a member of the Robinson family early in the eighteenth century. In William Aislabie's time Studley Royal was somewhat famous for its art treasures, and it contains at present a good collection of oil-paintings, amongst which is a portrait of Dr. Samuel Johnson by Sir Joshua Reynolds, and others of Charles XII. of Sweden, Peter the Great, Lady Jane Grey, Lord Burleigh, and Lord Bacon, by various famous artists.

The great attractions of Studley Royal, however, are not so much in its hall as in the pleasure grounds which surround it. There are not many country houses in England within whose grounds stand the remains of one of the noblest of Cistercian monasteries, and there are few remains of monasteries which have been so jealously guarded and cared for as those of the Abbey of Fountains. The first beginnings of the laying out of the grounds of Studley Royal were about the commencement of the eighteenth century, when John Aislabie, then Chancellor of the Exchequer, initiated the work by planting trees, devising roads and paths, and otherwise beautifying and improving his estate. After the acquisition of the site and ruins of Fountains by his son in 1767 further improvements were carried out, and still more work was done in the same direction when Studley Royal and Fountains Abbey passed into the possession of Earl de Grey in 1845. Naturally, there is much in the immediate surroundings of the abbey and of Studley Royal which is purely artificial, and therein the entire neighbourhood differs vastly from Bolton Priory, where nature has received little or no assistance from art; but all that has been done has been done so well, and with such admirable design and taste, that not even the most hypercritical lover of nature unaided and unadorned can find room for objection or for fault-finding—not even with the official cicerones, whose great delight seems to be to exhibit a surprise view of the abbey through the door of an arbour built on a commanding eminence. The river Skell passes through the domains of the abbey and the pleasure grounds of Studley Royal, and at certain points has been artificially adapted to somewhat different purposes to those which nature originally intended it for. Here and there it passes through channels of obvious artificial contrivance, and falls over miniature cascades; here and there, again, it has been so treated as to expand into miniature lakes; but in the immediate neighbourhood of Fountains Abbey no attempt has been made to interfere with or aid it. A

great feature of the park is its wealth of trees—the great avenue of limes, the clumps of beech, the close-clipped hedges of yew, and the height of the tall, graceful spruce firs are striking and full of charm. The spruce firs were planted by John Aislabie when he first set about laying out the grounds. One of them is over 130 feet in height and 12½ feet in girth ; another, not so tall, is 11 feet in girth. There is also here a very fine specimen of the hemlock spruce, 60 feet in height and 7 feet in circumference. All over the grounds are artificial aids to their attractiveness in the shape of statues, many of which are copies of the most famous examples of sculpture, and at various points of vantage the traveller will find grottoes or pleasure houses from which very fine and wide-spreading views are obtainable. There is a striking view from the Octagon Tower ; another from the Temple of Fame ; a third from the Temple of Piety. All these erections are ornamented with copies of antique sculptures, one of the finest of which is a bas-relief on the Temple of Piety, which depicts a Roman daughter affording sustenance to her captive father. On Herleshow, or How Hill, there are the scanty remains of an old church which was dedicated to St. Michael. But of all views in the park none are more familiar and none so charming as that from Anne Boleyn's Seat, which may be reached by crossing the bridge over the Skell, passing through a rock passage to the Octagon Tower, and thence through the wood. It is at this point that the official guides are so fond of marshalling visitors into something like line formation and then suddenly opening a door which until then has barred the view—with the result that so many pairs of astonished and admiring eyes find themselves gazing on Fountains Abbey framed by the doorway into a picture of rare beauty, which, it is needless to say, is just as beautiful without this particular fashion of mounting and framing it as with it. One feature of Fountains Abbey, as seen from this point of vantage, either through the guides' favourite frame or not, is its almost perfect condition—it presents so little of the usual aspect of an ancient building reduced by stress of time, storm, or force of circumstance to ruins that one might be well forgiven for believing it to be still the home of a religious community. Scarcely any visitor to Fountains Abbey, viewing the great religious house and its magnificent church from this point, would be surprised if he heard the slow, solemn chanting peculiar to the Cistercians mingling with the murmur of the Skell as it flows under the overhanging trees in the valley beneath.



*John Aislabie 1700*  
Fountains, 1700

## II

The history of the Abbey of Fountains, from the period of its inception in 1132 to the time of its dissolution in company with the other religious houses of this country in 1539, is full of interesting and even romantic detail. Like more than one monastery and convent of fame it sprung from dissatisfaction on the part of religious who longed to live lives of stricter discipline than were imposed upon them by the order to which they already belonged. About the beginning of the twelfth century the fame of the Cistercians as regards holiness of life and strictness of rule had spread throughout Christendom. One branch of their order, the members of which were sent over by St. Bernard himself, had settled at Rievaulx, near Helmsley, and the reputation of the brethren there for austerity and piety was soon noised abroad, and even penetrated within the walls of monasteries longer established. Into one religious house of the many then existing in Yorkshire the news of the sanctity of those who had taken upon them the rule of St. Bernard came with more than an ordinary interest. There were certain monks of the Benedictine Abbey of St. Mary in York upon whose consciences it had long been borne that the discipline of their own house was not so strict as it might be, and that the general tenour of the life which they lived in common with their brethren was more luxurious than self-denying. The names of these monks were Richard, sacrist at that time, Ralph, Gammel, Gregory, Hamo, Thomas, and Waltheof. They had formed themselves into a society within a society, and for some time had secretly observed stricter rules than those laid upon them by the ordinances of their order, concealing their desire for a holier life from all around them. It came to the knowledge of these seven that Richard, Prior of St. Mary's, also had cravings for a stricter rule, and him they took into their confidence. Other brethren joined this small band, until at last it numbered thirteen monks, all banded together in mutual resolve to live less easy lives than heretofore. It was scarcely possible that this movement should go on within the walls of St. Mary's Abbey without some news of it coming to the ears of those in high authority, and somewhere about 1131 the abbot became aware that there were those living under his nominal rule who already despised it in secret. This led first to discussions, then to a breach of amicable relations. Prior Richard and his little band of followers—for he, though a late-comer, had by this time taken the lead of those who thought with him—openly expressed their desire to retire from the Benedictine order and embrace that of St. Bernard; the abbot and his adherents opposed their desire strenuously, holding that such a proceeding must needs bring the Abbey of St. Mary into contempt. Thus it came about that in June 1132 Prior Richard appealed to his friend Thurstan, Archbishop of York, begging him to visit the abbey, inquire into its rules and conduct,

and decide between the two parties into which the brotherhood was now formed.

It was not until the following October—the exact date, according to Burton, was October 6, 1132—that Archbishop Thurstan, attended by many grave and discreet clergy of the northern province, went in solemn state to St. Mary's Abbey to hear all that was to be said on both sides. Whether it was ever really intended by the abbot and his supporters that a formal inquiry into the matter should take place is not very clear: what really happened was, that although the abbot on his side had gathered together learned men and monks from all parts of England to speak for him, he suddenly refused to allow Thurstan and his company to enter into chapter with them. Thereupon ensued a great commotion and to-do, after which Thurstan promptly laid St. Mary's and its monks under an interdict and returned to his cathedral. With him went the thirteen non-contents and with them one Robert, a monk of Whitby, who had allied himself with them, and is supposed to have been the man afterwards famous as St. Robert of Knaresborough, and the archbishop, being of a charitable disposition and well-inclined towards them, housed them, and kept them at his own charges until the following December, when he carried them off with him to keep Christmas in his company at the archiepiscopal palace in Ripon. During the time they were Thurstan's guests certain negotiations seem to have been going on between them and the Abbot of St. Mary's, and two of the thirteen returned to their old allegiance. One of them, however, speedily repented him and went back: there were therefore twelve monks enjoying the archbishop's hospitality in Ripon at the Christmas of 1132. Certain chroniclers and historians suggest that about this time Thurstan became somewhat weary of the tax thus made upon his resources, and that he resolved to rid himself of his guests. However that may be, it appears tolerably certain that on December 26, 1132, the archbishop conducted the twelve monks to the spot where Fountains Abbey now stands and made it over to them, together with the neighbouring village of Sutton. And so, electing Richard, sometime Prior of St. Mary's in York, as their first abbot, these monks began, in the depth of winter, to live the life after which they had shown much hankering.

That they had privations and sore endurances to contend with at first, these very valiant religious, no one can doubt. Burton, speaking of their new patrimony, says that "it had never been inhabited, unless by wild beasts, being overgrown with wood and brambles, lying between two steep hills and rocks, covered with wood on all sides, more proper for a retreat of wild beasts than the human species," and that they had nothing to shelter them or to subsist on. However, there was a great elm tree in the midst of the valley, and they made shift to live under this for a while, having contrived a roof, or an apology for one, by arranging thatch and straw over some of the lower branches. Thurstan appears to have supplied

them with bread for a time ; as for drink they had recourse to the pure water of the Skell, flowing close by. It is said that they lived a good deal on the leaves of trees, which they boiled and mixed with salt, and one cannot help wondering whether there was not within their minds at times some slight longing after the flesh-pots and wine-jars of Egypt, or rather of that very comfortable Abbey of St. Mary in York, where, if all that the old chroniclers say is true, there was not merely plenty of good food at all times, but some very desirable luxuries beyond the reach of well-to-do lay-folk of that time. But however that may be, there were no defections—instead, other folk desirous of leading a strict religious life made their way to the Cistercians on the banks of the Skell and abode with them. In spite of this accession to their strength Richard and his monks found it hard to live, and at last they despatched messengers to St. Bernard at Clairvaux, entreating his help and advice, who, filled with love and compassion towards them, sent back with the messengers one Geoffrey, who was charged to instruct them in the rules of the order, and show them how to set about building. How they were to build who were still obliged to live on boiled leaves, and such bread as came to them from charity, is a mystery, and it is not surprising to find that ere long the entire community contemplated leaving the Skell and retreating over-seas to France, where they hoped to obtain one of his granges from St. Bernard, their spiritual father. Then died Hugh of York, Dean of the Minster, and left them his possessions, which were many and great as things went in those days, and to them came Serlo and Tosti, Canons of York, who had saved something not altogether inconsiderable out of their incomes and revenues, and brighter times began to dawn. In 1135 the king, Stephen, came to York, and was no doubt influenced on behalf of the monks of Fountains by their friend Thurstan, for he confirmed all their possessions to them, exempted them from all taxes and rentages, and secured them firmly in their position. Thus within three years of their defection from St. Mary's Abbey Richard and his monks had tided over their first adversities, and were in a position to begin the erection of the great monastery which the tourist marvels at to-day.

Why the house which thus began on the banks of the Skell should have been called Fountains is a question which has been much argued. St. Bernard, the founder of the Cistercian Order as it was eventually settled after its elementary beginnings under Robert de Molesme, was born at Fontaines, in Burgundy, and some writers argue that the Skell-side monks called their new house Fontaines Abbey in honour of the fact. Others consider that the name arose from the presence of so many springs and rivulets hereabouts, while Whitaker points out that the name Skell signifies a fountain. There appears to be no doubt that the house was first known as the Abbey of Skelldale, or, in Latin, *de Fontibus*, and the contention that when the old documents in that tongue came to be translated into English

the name Fountains instead of Skelldale was used seems to be reasonable. The construction of Fountains Abbey seems to have begun soon after the community's accession of wealth in 1135, but whatever buildings were then raised were wholly or almost wholly destroyed before 1148. In or about that year William Fitzherbert, then Archbishop of York, was deposed, and Henry Murdoc, Abbot of Fountains, was made archbishop in his place, with the result that a body of William's adherents came across country to the newly-erected house and set fire to it and its oratory. But the brotherhood did not lack friends at that time, and funds for the restoration and completion of the work were quickly forthcoming. The greater part of the buildings were erected between the beginning and the middle of the thirteenth century under the directions of Abbots John de Ebor, John de Pherd, and John de Cancia. The first-named is credited with the foundations of the choir and with some of the pillars of the church; the last with the erection of the cloister, infirmary, guest-house, and the pavement and nine altars at the west end of the chancel. John de Pherd appears to have carried on the work during his reign of office on general lines and with much diligence. As it proceeded the abbey became one of the richest and most powerful institutions in the kingdom. About the end of the century which witnessed the erection of the greater part of the buildings it certainly suffered from lack of means, and Archbishop John the Roman certified its distress to the visitors sent from headquarters at Clairvaux to examine into its general condition. But this was probably a temporary embarrassment caused by the heavy expenditure necessitated by the building, and it appears to have been overcome within a short period. During the fourteenth century the community suffered a good deal from the Scottish raids, but they were fortunate in not having their house and church





burnt over their heads, as happened in the case of several neighbouring religious houses. The losses which they sustained at this period caused Edward II. to grant them a total exemption from taxes, which act of grace doubtless afforded them much relief, seeing that the Scots had destroyed the greater part of their crops and had burnt several of their granaries.

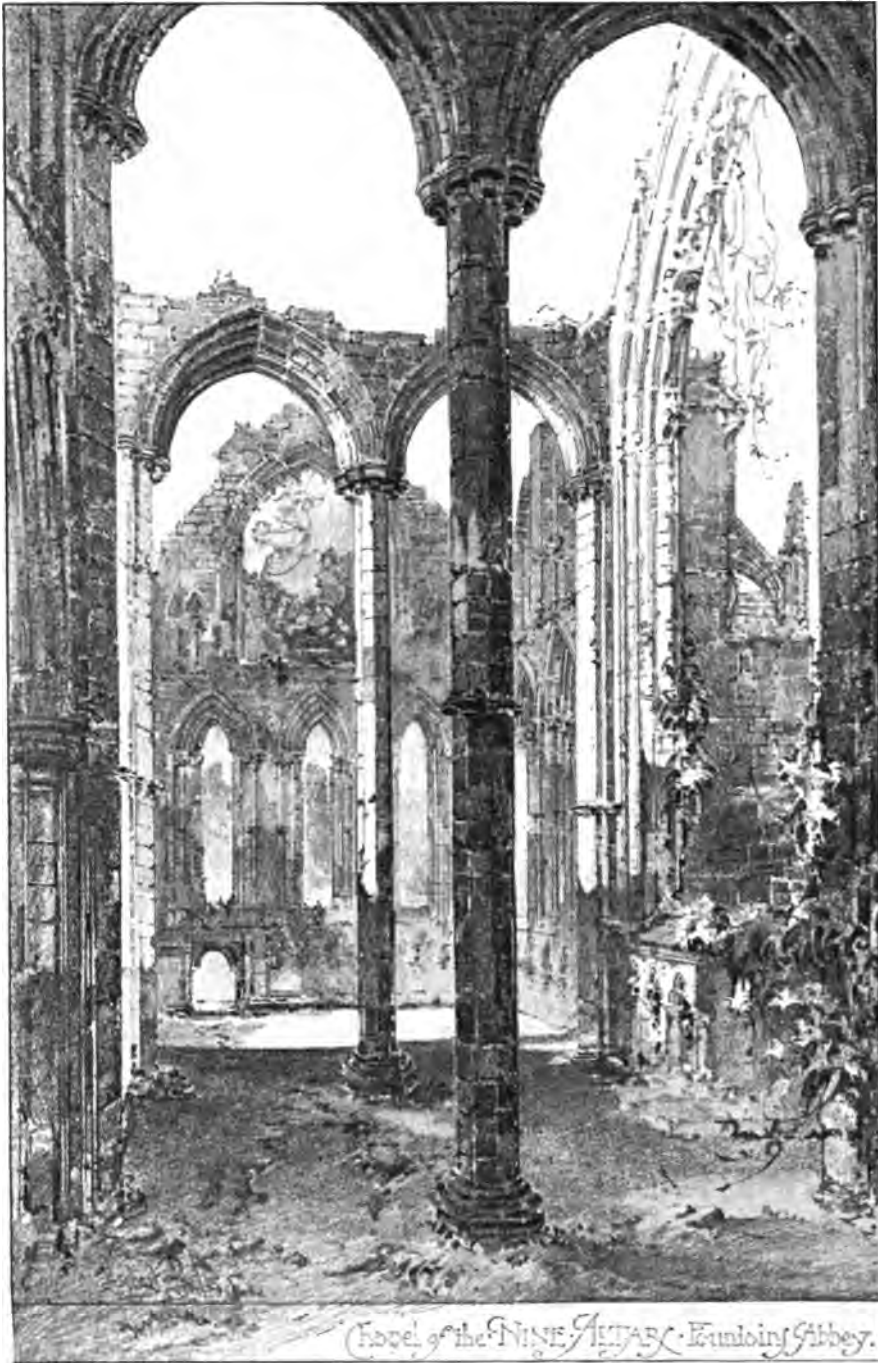
With the days of greater security which followed the successes gained over the Scots by Edward III. the community at Fountains entered upon their greatest period of prosperity. The strictness of the rule under which the monks lived had gained for them a far-reaching reputation for sanctity, and many of the most powerful nobles of the north, desiring a place of sepulture within the walls which sheltered such piety, gave great gifts of land and money to the abbey on condition of being entombed there. One of the first of the great territorial lords who thus enriched Fountains and afterwards was buried within its walls was Richard de Percy, one of the nobles who were banded together in wresting the Great Charter from John, and one of the twenty-four guardians appointed to see to its due observance. Other members of the Percy family conferred great benefits on the community, and one of them, Henry de Percy, who was one of Edward I.'s principal generals in the Scottish wars and was afterwards created Earl of Carrick by the same monarch, was buried in the abbey church before the high altar in 1315. The lands and moneys obtained from these rich patrons soon made Fountains a centre of great monastic wealth and power. The community also reaped a great advantage from the fact that it was always in great favour with the Archbishops of York, who seem to have lost no opportunity of showing their goodwill towards it. From the middle of the fourteenth to the beginning of the sixteenth century Fountains Abbey appears to have been at the height of its fame and prosperity. Its monks, beginning their career in the deepest poverty, found themselves within a marvellously short space of time in possession of over sixty thousand acres of land. Their moors, pastures, corn-lands, lead-mines, stone quarries, fisheries, and game preserves stretched from the slopes of Penyghent to the confines of the lands sacred to St. Wilfrith of Ripon, and a monk might walk thirty miles westward from the banks of the Skell without stepping off the communal property. Their flocks and herds ranged all the high land between Ripon and Kilnsey; Fountains Fell derives its name from its association with them at this time; the lead mines of Nidderdale were worked by their servants and bondmen. For anything that the chroniclers say to the contrary the monks retained their austerity and simplicity of life for a long period after power and affluence came to them, and until the beginning of the sixteenth century their abbots appear to have been distinguished for their learning and for their devotion to the strict rule of St. Bernard. But the accretion of wealth to the great monastic communities was almost invariably followed by the inroads of taste for luxury, and one of the last of the Abbots of

Fountains, William Thirske, seems to have yielded to temptation in very serious and deplorable fashion, for it is recorded that he was accused by his own monks of theft and sacrilege, in stealing and selling certain ornaments of great value, and in appropriating to his own uses the moneys which he had received from purchasers of wood, cattle, and produce, the property of the brotherhood. These charges being proved against him he was deprived of his high office and expelled the abbey, to make a miserable end on the scaffold at Tyburn in 1537.

William Thirske was succeeded by Marmaduke Bradley, the last of the Abbots of Fountains, who, after reigning three years, surrendered the abbey to the royal commissioners in November 1539. The estimates of the annual revenues of the community at that time vary somewhat. Dugdale computes them at £998, 6s. 8½d., Speed at £1073, os. 7½d., while Burton, referring to certain MSS. which he found in possession of the Messenger family, sometime owners of the estate, gives them as having been £1125, 18s. 1¾d. There was then plate in the abbey of the value of £708, 5s. 9d., and an inventory of other possessions of the monks shows that they had in hand at that time 2356 horned cattle, 1326 sheep, 86 horses, 79 swine, 117 quarters of wheat, 12 quarters of rye, 90 quarters of barley and malt, and 2 quarters of oats. As for the abbot and brethren then in residence they were pensioned off, Marmaduke Bradley receiving an annual pension of £100, and the monks allowances of from £8 to £5 a year each. So the monastic days of Fountains were over, and nineteenth-century folk have much to be thankful for because despoliation of the church and cloisters did not immediately follow the turning out of the monks. The lead from the roofs, the glass from the windows, and the woodwork and furniture of church and cloisters were removed, but the fabric was left standing. In 1540 Henry VIII. granted the site of Fountains Abbey, with lands in its neighbourhood, formerly the property of the monks, to Sir Richard Gresham, in consideration of the receipt of £1163. In 1596 William Gresham sold the estate to Sir Stephen Proctor of Ripon for £4500. This owner built Fountains Hall out of the stone which had formerly composed the Abbots Lodging, in 1611. From the Proctors the place passed through the female line to the family of Messenger, in whose hands it remained until 1767, when it was sold to William Aislabie for £18,000. William Aislabie immediately commenced the improvements in the immediate surroundings of the abbey which were carried on until it came into the hands of its present owners in 1845, and to him must be given the first credit of doing all that could be done to preserve one of the most magnificent and interesting of the old monastic establishments for the delight of future generations.

## III

In the days of its prosperity the buildings and church of Fountains Abbey are computed to have covered twelve acres of ground, that area including the orchard, gardens, and lawns; the ruins now standing cover two acres. They are reached from the south bank of the Skell by an old bridge, said to have been built in the thirteenth century, on the right hand of which, also built over the river, is what remains of the Infirmary. On the other hand, a little way past the ruins of the gatehouse is the Hospice, which, like the Infirmary, was erected by Abbot John de Cancia. The Hospice was, in its perfect state, in two separate buildings, that on the east having been of considerable extent. Opposite the Hospice and extending from the river towards the west end of the church is the long line of the Cloister or *Domus Conversorum*, one of the most beautiful and interesting parts of the abbey. It forms a magnificent covered court, 300 feet in length and 42 feet in width, divided down the centre by nineteen octagonal pillars, from which spring two ranges of interesting arches supporting the roof. At each end of the cloister there is a staircase which leads to the dormitory above. This extended the whole length of the building and contained forty cells, twenty on each side, with a corridor between. From the east end there is access to the abbey church, wherein the traveller will find such opportunities of examining the various styles of Gothic architecture as are not often presented. There is a preponderance of the late Norman style, but the Choir and Lady Chapel are Early English, and the tower is Perpendicular. The nave, which gives an impression of great length, is the oldest portion of the church, and is an excellent example of the Norman work of the early Transitional period, which saw the rounded arch superseded by the pointed. It is divided from its side aisles by round and lofty pillars, 16 feet in circumference and 23 feet in height, above the pointed arches of which is a row of plain, round-headed lights. Each bay of the aisles, according to Mr. Walbran, was covered by a pointed but transverse vault, divided by semi-circular arches, of which the imposts are placed considerably lower than those of the pillars to which they are attached. "Nearly the whole of the eastern half of these aisles," continues this authority, "has been divided by lattices into chapels, of which there are some indications in the painted devices and matrices of their furniture, traceable on the piers. There has also been a wooden screen across the nave, at the seventh pillar eastward." The great west window, the tracery of which has now disappeared, was built at the instance of Abbot Derntun in 1494 and replaced the original Norman lights. Outside, it has an emblem which conveys the name of the founder after the fashion of that day. It is the figure of an eagle, the symbol of St. John, which holds a crozier and rests upon a tun, with a label inscribed "DERN 1494," thus signifying that John Derntun instigated the work in the year named.



The transept of the church contains fewer traces of the Transitional period than the nave. There were here four chantry chapels, two on the north and two on the south. In that of St. Peter was the tomb of Roger de Mowbray, who died at Ghent in 1298 and was brought here for burial. The inscription, still fairly traceable, over the entrance of another, *Allare s'ci Michaelis arch*, shows that it was dedicated to St. Michael the Archangel. There is a mutilated slab in one of the south chapels which probably marks the last resting-place of one of the abbots. The arches which supported the tower, originally rising from the intersection of nave and transepts, are still traceable, but the tower itself, one of the finest parts of the whole fabric, now stands at the north end of the transept and is almost as perfect as when it was first erected by Abbot Marmaduke Huby in 1494. It is a specimen of pure Perpendicular architecture and is 168½ feet in height with an internal base of 25 square feet. Its four sides are ornamented by carved shields and inscriptions, the latter being carved in bold black-letter on the fillets above and below the windows of the belfry. These inscriptions are as follows:—

## EAST SIDE.

*Benedictio et caritas et sapiencia gratiarum accio honor.  
Soli deo i'hu x'po honor et gl'ia in s'cla s'clor.*

## NORTH SIDE.

*Et virtus et fortitudo deo nostro in secula seculorum amen.  
Soli deo i'hu x'po honor et gl'ia in s'cla s'clor ame'.*

## WEST SIDE.

*Regi autem seculorum immortalis inuisibili'  
Soli deo i'hu x'po honor et gloria in s'cla s'clor.*

## SOUTH SIDE.

*Soli deo honor et gloria in secula seculorum amen.*

Over the lowermost western window of the tower is the figure of an angel, standing on the canopy of a vacant niche, holding a shield, on which is carved a mitre, a crozier, and the letters M. H. These form a reference to Marmaduke Huby, who entered into the office of abbot in 1494, which date is on the bracket of a niche above the eastern basement window. In a niche over the lower north window is a crowned figure holding a pen in the right hand and a book in the left. The details of the architectural features of the tower are wonderfully fresh, and the mouldings, niches, canopies, and pinnacles remarkably well preserved.

The choir of the church, to which under the strict rule of the Cistercians none but the higher brethren were ever admitted, is about 150 feet in length, and contains numerous architectural features of great interest. It is held to be a fine specimen of Early English architecture, "plain and some-

what massive in its general appearance," says Grainge, "but with many well-proportioned details. The great east window and adjoining buttresses display the magnificence and beauty of the latest style of Gothic architecture, which is here indicated by the remains of perpendicular mullions, flying buttresses, and crocketed pinnacles. The great window has apparently had nine lights and a transom, and been 63 feet in height by 23 feet 4 inches in width. The other windows of this front, twelve in number, are narrow, pointed, and supported by slender shafts." The most beautiful portion of this part of the church is undoubtedly the Lady Chapel, the slender octagonal pillars of which are universally regarded with unbounded admiration. The great east window, which has now lost all its tracery, is 60 feet high by 23½ wide, and has apparently had nine lights and a transom. At its foot, extending on either side from the east end of the Lady Chapel, was the Chapel of the Nine Altars, the remains of six of which have been discovered during excavating processes at one time or another.

Of the monastic buildings clustering about the beautiful abbey church there are still many substantial remains left. A quadrangular court 128 feet square lies on the south of the nave, from which it is entered by a door at the south-east angle. On its south side is the refectory, which is a very interesting example of the Early English style, with buttery, kitchen, and serving and keeping rooms adjoining. Its chief architectural beauty is a fine piece of Norman work in the shape of a receding circular arch. The dining-hall, which is 109 feet in length and 46 feet in width, was originally supported by a row of columns which ran down the centre of the apartment. The buildings adjoining or in close proximity to the refectory are of similarly imposing dimensions. The frater-house, a vaulted apartment in the Transition style, is 104 feet in length and 29 in width; the cellar 59 feet long and 18 feet wide; the brew-house 30 feet by 18 feet. Under the latter a large collection of silver coins, numbering 354 pieces in all, was discovered during the excavation of the foundations some years ago. They ranged from the time of Queen Mary to that of Charles I., but there was nothing to show by whom they had been deposited.

One of the most interesting parts of the ruins of Fountains Abbey is the chapter-house, which is separated from the south transept of the church by a narrow vestry. Here the public confession enjoined by the Cistercian rule was conducted, and here the monastic discipline practised by the monks was observed. Its area is about 84 feet in length by 41 feet in width, and it had three aisles, divided by marble columns, five of which still remain. On Burton discovering from the records of the abbey that nineteen of the abbots were interred here, a clearance of the accumulated debris was made in 1791 with the result that fragments of the tombstones of fifteen of them were discovered. The carvings and inscriptions on these are in most cases illegible or altogether obliterated, but a few of them may still be traced.

One runs as follows:—

HI REQUIESCIT DOMPNUS JOH'S X. ABBAS DE  
FONTIBV. QVJ OBIJT. VIII. DECEMBERIS.

and is supposed to refer to Abbot John of York, who began the rebuilding of the choir, and who died 8th December 1210. Close to this tomb is that of Abbot John of Kent, who finished the choir previous to his death in November 1246. The inscription on this is still legible:—

HI REQUIESCIT: DOMPNUS JOH'S: XII: ABBAS DE  
FONTIB': Q' OBIJT XXV: NOVEMBERIS.

Other slabs have been pronounced as capable of identification with the tombs of various later Abbots of Fountains. "A plain ridged gravestone, on the south side of the above," says Grainge, "covers the remains of the fourteenth abbot, William de Allerton, who died 1st December 1258. This stone never appears to have had any inscription. On a fragment is 'ADAM XIV. ABBAS.' This belongs to the fifteenth abbot, who died a few months after his election, on the 30th of April 1259. Another fragment, on a broken sandstone near the middle of the room, commemorates Reginald, the seventeenth abbot, who died on the 25th of October 1274. Henry de Otteley, the twenty-first abbot, who died 24th December 1290, was buried in the entrance to the chapter-house, and a flat monumental flag near the centre doorway may be supposed to cover his remains." Over the chapter-house were the library and scriptorium, always apartments of great importance in a religious house where the Cistercian rule was observed.

Another deeply-interesting portion of the ruins is the site and remains of the Abbot's House, which, unfortunately, was pulled down by Sir Stephen Proctor in 1611 for the sake of its materials, which he afterwards made use of in building Fountains Hall. Modern excavations show that this house rested on four parallel tunnels, each 300 feet in length, six feet in height, and six feet in width, through which flowed the Skell. It was of imposing dimensions, and Grainge surmises that at the time of its foundation it was probably the most spacious house in the kingdom, erected irrespective of military occupation or defence. Its great hall, 171 feet in length and 70 in width, was divided by eighteen cylindrical columns into a nave and two aisles, and appears to have been of the same order of architecture as the Lady Chapel in the abbey church. It had its own chapel, kitchens, and offices, and its refectory was a magnificent apartment, 50 feet by 30 feet, with a dais at the upper end for the abbot's table. Fountains Hall, the house built by Sir Stephen Proctor out of the materials of this imposing abbatial residence, stands a little to the west of the ruins. It is a picturesque old house, with a fine entrance gate and a charming garden, and the interior contains some interesting tapestry and sculpture. Over



Chapel of the NINE ALTARS Fountains Abbey







Chapel of the NINE ALTARS - Fountains Abbey.



the chief entrance are the crests of Sir Stephen Proctor and Honor, his wife, with the legend *Rien Trovant Gaineray Tout*, appearing between them. Near the Hall stood the seven famous yew trees under which the first monks of



Fountains Hall.

Fountains took up their habitations when Thurstan made them free of this corner of his archdiocese. There are now only two left, but they are supposed to be considerably over a thousand years old, and their venerable appearance is a sure warrant that they were standing here long before the Cistercians began the building of their great house.

## IV

The traveller who cares to follow the windings of the little river Skell as it turns to the west from the neighbourhood of Fountains Abbey will find that for a considerable portion of its course it leads through one of the most charming and picturesque of the many valleys which run



MARKENFIELD HALL

into the greater vale of the Ure. The Skell rises amidst somewhat desolate surroundings between Pateley Moor and Dallowgill Moor, and for a while intersects a country in which there is little to see but great stretches of heather. Where it is joined by Eavestone Beck its course becomes romantic in the extreme, and the pathway along its bank at one place passes through a rock of sandstone, 60 feet in height, which has been split in two by some natural force. At Grantley Hall the scenery is very

pleasant and eminently English in character, and at High Grantley there is an ancient manor-house, with mullioned windows, which it is well worth turning aside to see. There is a curious sixteenth-century church at Aldfield, a village little more than a mile from Fountains, wherein is a quaint epitaph on one Anthony Robinson, presumably a blacksmith of Fountains, who died in 1756, aged thirty-one.

My hammer and stiddy lies decline,  
My bellows to has lost it wind.  
My fire extinguist, my forge is done ;  
And in the dust my vice is laid,  
My coals is spent, my iron gone,  
My last nail driven, my work is done.

The most notable place along either bank of the Skell, however, Fountains Abbey apart, is Markenfield Hall, a fine old moated house, somewhat to the south-east of Studley Park, which was once the residence of the Markenfield family. It is probably as perfect a specimen of the old English moated residence as the country possesses, and is of considerable size, with a banqueting-hall, chapel, and a great wealth of old oak panelling. Its glories as a residence, however, are all passed away, and to-day it is simply a venerable relic of the past, left standing in its spacious courtyard, but still guarded by the dark waters of its moat.

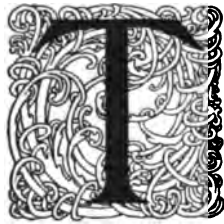


## CHAPTER XLIII

### The Ure from Ripon to Leyburn

EARTHWORKS AT CASTLE DIKES—NORTON CONYERS—WATH—WEST TANFIELD—ANCIENT ENTRENCHMENTS NEAR WEST TANFIELD—HACK FALL—GREWELTHORPE—KIRKBY MALZEARD—MASHAM—WELL—THORPE PERROW AND SNAPE CASTLE—BEDALE—KILGRIM BRIDGE—JERVAUX ABBEY—LEYBURN—LEYBURN SHAWL—MIDDLEHAM AND ITS CASTLE—COVERHAM ABBEY—COVERDALE.

#### I



THE immediate surroundings of the Ure in its stages between Ripon and the beginnings of Wensleydale are singularly rich in picturesque effects and in historical association, and the traveller who is resolved to see all that they have to show, and learn all that they can suggest, will find that his journeyings along the river banks and his necessary excursions into the outlying villages will yield him sufficient occupation for several days. It is only possible here to give a mere outline of what is to be seen in this district, and a faint sketch of its associations and annals, but it may be of service to indicate how a stranger may best make himself acquainted with both. An extremely interesting excursion, with Ripon as its centre, may be made from that city through Hutton Conyers, Nunwick, and Norton Conyers to Wath, and thence to West Tanfield, where the Ure may be crossed and a path found along the south bank of the river through Mickley to Hack Fall. From this famous beauty spot the road may be taken through Grewelthorpe to Kirkby Malzeard, from whence Ripon can be reached again by following the road along the banks of the Laver until the highway is reached near Studley Park, or by a still nearer route through the hamlet of Galphay. A second excursion, with Masham as its base, may be made from that town to Well, Thorpe Perrow, and Bedale, from whence the traveller should turn southward again by way of Thornton Watlass and Thirn to Kilgrim Bridge, where he will find himself in close proximity to Jervaux

Abbey. A third excursion, covering a considerable extent of ground and involving the inspection of many historical remains, may be made from Leyburn by way of Middleham and its castle to Coverham Abbey, and thence along the entire length of Coverdale, a valley which is justly famous for the fine views it affords, and for the magnificent prospect of Wharfedale which may be seen from its highest point, Cover Head, nearly 1600 feet above sea-level. Each of these excursions may be extended at the traveller's will—in this corner of the county there is scarcely a by-lane or footpath which does not lead to some place of interest or some point of vantage.



Norton Conyers

Before proceeding on the first, however, the traveller would do well to go some little way out of Ripon along the highroad leading to West Tanfield, in order to inspect the earthworks called Castle Dikes, which are supposed to be the remains of a Roman camp. The mounds on all four sides of the camp are still plainly marked, and the excavations made here about thirty years ago yielded some very fine specimens of Roman pavement, pottery, and similar remains. This brief excursion has the further advantage of leading the traveller past the Palace of the Bishops of Ripon, which is beautifully situated amongst thick woods at a little distance from the Ure.

The road from Ripon to Norton Conyers crosses the river by the fine bridge at the foot of the long hill leading from the railway station to the market-place, and presently winds round to the hamlets of Hutton Conyers and Nunwick, neither of them remarkable, save for the views they afford from their elevation on the high ground overlooking the valley. From Nunwick the prospect of the country through which the Ure runs between Ripon and West Tanfield is particularly fine, and from this point until Norton Conyers is reached the scenery increases in beauty and interest. Norton Conyers itself, one of the finest country seats in Yorkshire, is a

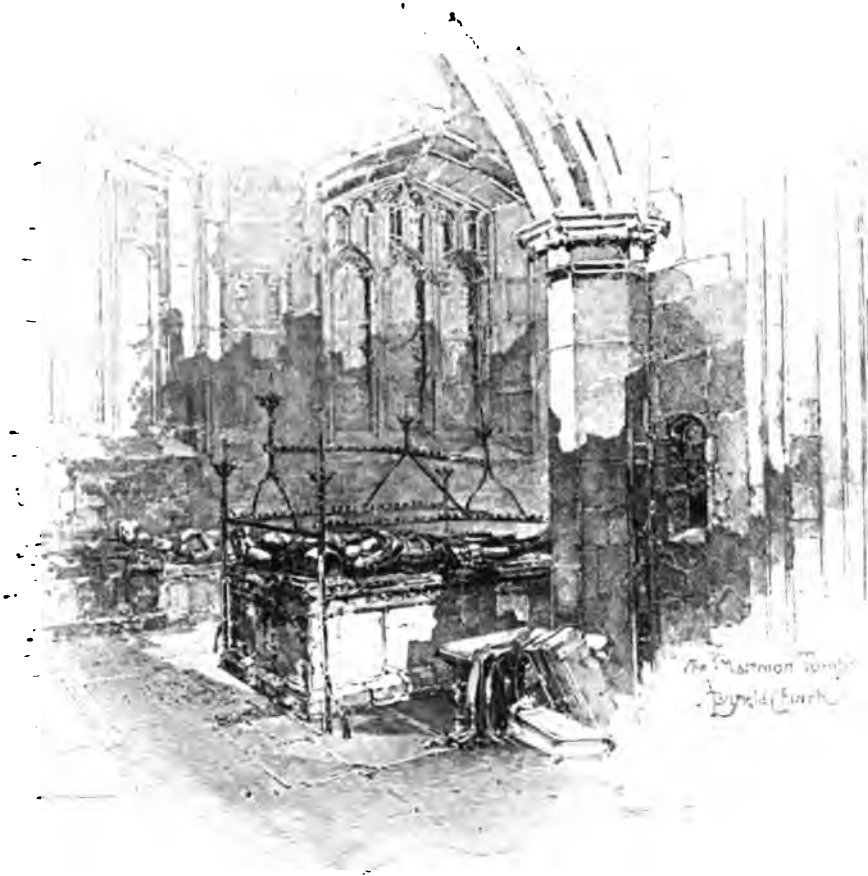


splendid old mansion of the Elizabethan style, standing in a richly-wooded park which extends from the summit of a slight eminence down to the banks of the Ure, which is here of considerable width. It is now the seat of Sir Reginald Graham, Bart. (*cr.* 1662), but was originally the home of the Nortons, of fame at the time of the Rising of the North. It came into possession of the Grahams—descendants of the Scottish Greames or Graemes, a warlike race which can trace its doings back to the fifth century—early in the days of the Stuarts. There are many historical associations connected with this many-gabled old place, and also an interesting legend which is scarcely less interesting because it is merely a legend. It is said that when Sir Richard Graham, Master of the Horse to Charles I., and a most devoted adherent of that unfortunate monarch, perceived that all was lost at Marston Moor, he turned and fled for Norton Conyers, having over twenty wounds in his body, and was hotly pursued by Cromwell and his Ironsides. It is further said that the pursuers caught up the old knight as he reached his house, and that Cromwell, forcing his horse to ascend the staircase, shook the last breath out of his enemy's body in Sir Richard's own chamber. In proof of this, the plain mark of a horse's hoof is shown on the staircase, but unfortunately for romance, the real facts are that Cromwell was not near Norton Conyers on the night of Marston Moor, and Sir Richard Graham did not die until ten years had elapsed since that decisive victory.

Just beyond the northern edge of Norton Conyers the traveller will find an extremely interesting village named Wath, which possesses one of the most notable churches in this part of Yorkshire. It was restored in the most careful and thorough fashion several years ago, under the direction of its then rector, the late Rev. W. C. Lukis, one of the best informed archæologists of his time, to whose labours is due the fact that the church is a model of judicious renovation. It is Early English in style, and contains a large number of objects of interest in the shape of monuments and brasses. Amongst these is the tomb of the Sir Richard Graham just mentioned, a brass in memory of Richard Norton, Chief Justice of the King's Bench, who died in 1420, and another of Richard Norton and his wife, who died of the plague in 1433. There is also an Early English font, a curious chest of Flemish manufacture, some fine stained glass, extremely ancient, and a water-colour painting by the late Mr. Lukis, which shows the interior of the church as it appeared previous to restoration. In close proximity to Wath lies Howgrave, where there are several matters well worthy the attention of the archæologist, and Middleton Quernhow, where there is a picturesque old mansion, once the seat of the Herberts, to one of whom, Thomas Herbert, who had been chosen by the Parliament to attend on Charles I. during the short period between his trial and his execution, the king presented his watch.

The road from Wath to West Tanfield gradually draws nearer to the

river, and as the last-named place is reached the traveller is presented to scenes of considerable beauty. The village is finely situated on rising ground which slopes down to the Ure, and has an old-fashioned and even romantic aspect. Like many other villages of some size its chief interest lies in its church. Once upon a time the Marmions, whose names are so wrapped up with the history and romance of the North, had a castle here,



but no trace of it now remains save a gateway near the church. But in the church there are numerous monuments of the greatness of the Marmions in the shape of their tombs, which have been preserved there for several centuries. Leland speaks of seeing these tombs when he was travelling in these parts. "In the church of West Tanfield be divers tumbes in a chapelle on the north side of the church of the Marmions, whereof one (with the sculptures of a knight and a lady) is in the arch of the waulle, and that seemeth most ancient. There lyeth there alone a lady with the apparril of vowes, and another lady with a crownet on her head. Then

there is an high tumber of alabaster (with two very fair figures of a warrior and his dame) in the middle of the chapel, wher, as I heard say, lyeth one John Lord Marmion, and in the south side of the chapelle is another tumber of the Marmions buried alone." This description of what the Marmion chapel contained in the sixteenth century is practically that which might be written of its contents to-day, with the exception that during recent years the alabaster tomb has been wantonly defaced by the senseless inscription of initials upon its surface. In their way these tombs are unique, and it is a matter for grave regret that they should not have been carefully guarded. It is also a matter for regret that the church in which they rest should not have been restored in more fitting style. It was originally Norman, but its restoration, carried out about thirty years ago,

was accomplished in such ill-considered fashion that it is grievous, rather than pleasing, to inspect it. Nevertheless, there are here, in addition to the famous Marmion tombs, some quaint and interesting things—a curious cell, some four feet square, adjoining the chancel arch on the north, and having a squint which commands the Marmion chapel, and some interesting inscriptions on the church and in the churchyard. In West Tanfield itself there are some interesting houses of great antiquity, and in the immediate neighbourhood of the village there are three circular entrenchments of much interest to those who concern themselves with the remains of former ages. These entrenchments, according to Professor Phillips, who appears to have made a very careful survey of them, are of similar plans and proportions, about half a mile asunder, and are placed almost exactly in a straight line, directed to the NNW., and in the course of the Roman road which ran from Wensleydale by way of Well to join Leeming Lane. "Each



circle," says the same authority, "is interrupted by a clear road or passage through it, and the openings thus made point one to another, so that the three entrenchments constitute one great work. . . . A line drawn from Well, where Roman remains have been found, to the SSE., would pass nearly through the centres of the 'rings.' Between the northern and middle ring is an interval of three-eighths of a mile; between the middle and southern entrenchments about five-eighths of a mile; and in this larger space near the middle and on the line joining the two is a tumulus of rather large diameter (111 feet), but of comparatively small elevation. Of the three circles, that to the north had been preserved by the plantation in a nearly perfect state; the middle one is in com-

paratively good preservation; the southern one is much degraded by the plough, though centuries must elapse before its main features are destroyed. These remarkable earthworks are formed on the plan of that well known at Arbor Low in Derbyshire. The great feature is a circular mound, about 1800 feet in circumference, and rising in places to 15 feet in height; within this is a ditch 10 feet deep in the parts best preserved, and above 1200 feet in circuit; on the outside a concentric depression which is most traceable round the northern ring. . . . These works are sometimes described as Saxon camps; they have also been regarded as hippodromes, and may further be considered as suited to National Councils, though they have not, as at Arbor Low, stone seats in the inner circle for the leaders of the tribe, while the people gathered on the opposite bank."

From West Tanfield the traveller may cross the Ure by the bridge which carries the highroad to Ripon across the river, and then turn along



the footpath which keeps closely to the south bank from the foot of the bridge to Mickley, a prettily situated riverside village, and thence through Common Woods to Hackfall. This place, or rather, expanse of diversified ground, is justly celebrated for its beauty. It has been added to by artificial means, but its natural features are such that the hand of man has done nothing to spoil it. It is a miniature glen of great picturesqueness, and at some points of real sublimity of feature, and in early summer or in autumn its woods are full of colour and beauty. There is a cave or grotto in the valley called Fisher's Hall, wherein are a number of incrustations collected from the streams flowing through the valley, which is said by a local writer to derive its name from Hag's Vale, and to have been the favourite abode of numerous witches. There is also a ruined tower, named Mowbray Castle, and close by a remarkable coign of vantage called Mowbray Point, of which Gilpin, a very respectable authority on scenery, says, "Here Nature hath wrought with her broadest pencil; the parts are ample; the composition perfectly correct; I scarcely remember in any other place an extensive view so full of beauties and so free from faults." The view from Mowbray Point is indeed remarkable, and covers a vast expanse of country stretching from York Minster, thirty miles distant, to the valley of the Tees far away beyond Northallerton, in one direction—this covering a great portion of the level plain which runs almost through the centre of Yorkshire from Doncaster to the Durham border—and in another to the summit of Roseberry Topping beyond the Hambleton Hills.

A little southward of Hack Fall lies Grewelthorpe, a quaint, old-fashioned place with a village green, which has long been famous for the manufacture of cream-cheese, but of whose history, ancient enough, no doubt, there appear to be small details extant. There is more history and no less of the picturesque to be found at Kirkby Malzeard, a considerable village at a little distance away, which was once a market town, and the site of a castle of the great Barons de Mowbray. Its first market charter was granted to John de Mowbray by Edward I. in 1307, at which time its castle had been built for over two hundred years. The castle was dismantled in 1311 in consequence of the rebellion of Roger de Mowbray against Henry II. It stood on high ground in the neighbourhood of the church, and numerous antiquities have been discovered at various times on its site. The present church of Kirkby Malzeard dates from the middle of the twelfth century, and contains some fine specimens of Norman work. There was a chantry chapel of the De Mowbrays here in the south aisle, and there are numerous interesting monuments in and about the church, one of which records the deaths of the three wives of one Christopher Walker, whose respective ages were 63, 33, and 23—an inscription which serves to show that Christopher as he grew older in years grew younger in his affections. In this



Recorded in 1852  
 as having been  
 discovered in  
 1852

church in 1639 was conducted the trial of one Janet Burniston, who was charged with taking a skull out of the churchyard. Her defence was that a fellow-parishioner, Christopher Head, could not get sleep, and that she had thought to charm him to slumber by laying the skull beneath his pillow, whereupon she was duly reprimanded and admonished to restore the skull to the churchyard. Between Kirkby Malzeard and Ripon the country is charming at any period of the year, and the traveller who desires to make deeper acquaintance with it will find material for his attention in any of the villages on the banks of the Laver, or in those which lie between that picturesque stream and the Ure, into which, with the Skell, it flows at Ripon.

## II

Few of the smaller market towns of Yorkshire are more picturesquely situated than Masham, which occupies a peculiarly advantageous position on a promontory formed by the meeting of the Burn with the Ure. Its appearance is quaint, and suggestive of long-dead centuries. It consists, practically, of one great market square, surrounded by old-fashioned houses, with an obelisk or pillar, rising from a base of four steps, in the centre, and at the east end a very fine church, surmounted by a handsome octagonal spire of considerable height. There is said to have been a church here in the seventh century, and there is some evidence that the place was originally a Brigantian settlement. At the time of the Norman Conquest the town and manor passed into the hands of Alan, Earl of Richmond, and they were subsequently held by the De Mowbrays, the Waltons, the Scropes, and the Danbys. Of these families the Scropes appear to have had most connection with the town. The first market-charter for Masham was obtained by Sir John de Walton in 1250, subsequent ones being procured through the favour of Geoffrey, Lord Scrope, in 1330, and later by Lord Chief Justice Scrope and subsequent heads of that distinguished family. When Henry, the Lord Scrope referred to by Shakespeare in his *King Henry V.*, was executed in 1413 for high treason, the estates were confiscated, but they were restored to the family eight years later. After the failure of the male line of the Scropes, they passed by marriage into the families of Danby, Strangeways, and Fitz-Randolph. They were purchased some years ago from Mr. Danby, co-heir of Geoffrey, the ninth and last Lord Scrope, by Mr. Samuel Cunliffe Lister, the famous inventor and silk manufacturer of Bradford, who was elevated to the peerage under the title of Baron Masham in 1891, and whose country seat, Swinton Park, is situated a little way southward of the town.

The most interesting object in Masham is undoubtedly the parish church of St. Mary, which is not merely notable on account of its architecture but also because of its historical associations. It is somewhat curious, considering the close relationship of the Scrope family with the town, that

no memorials of its members are to be found in the church—most of them appear to have been interred, at Danby, or at Spennithorne. But there are not wanting several tombs and monuments of more than ordinary



*Swinton Park*

interest. There is a fine memorial of Sir Marmaduke Wyvill and his wife, who died during the reign of James I., in the church, and in the churchyard the traveller will find the graves of two local artists of much note in this neighbourhood, Julius Cæsar Ibbetson, a landscape painter, who appears to have been something of an oddity, and who died in 1817, and George Cuitt, who executed some very fine etchings of the Yorkshire abbeys and priories, and died in 1854. Closely adjacent to the church porch there is a fine circular pillar, evidently of Norman origin, which is said to have been brought here from Jervaux. The carvings on this ancient relic are nearly obliterated, but they seem to have consisted of representations of the Saviour and the Twelve Apostles, some figures on horseback, the Adoration of the Magi, and a figure seated in a chair and presumed to represent the Blessed Virgin. The architecture of the church is sufficiently interesting in itself to merit a close examination. The west door of the tower is Norman, and there are some small Norman lights above it. The inner arch of the tower, now built up, is Norman also. The greater part of the tower is Early English, the nave and transepts of late date, and a noticeable feature of the church is a series of six pointed arches, supported by octangular columns, which separates the north aisle from the nave.

When Leland visited this part of Yorkshire he found Masham pretty much as it shows itself to the traveller of to-day. "Masseham," he remarks, "is a praty quik"—this was a favourite expression of his—

“market-town, and a fair Chirch, an a bridge of tymbre. A little bynethe Masseham on the other side of Yore river lye the Aldbury village. At the end of Masseham townlet, I passed over a fair river called Bourne, it goeth into the Ure thereby a little bynethe the bridge.” There were good markets in Leland’s time, but these seem to have decayed, though there is still a great annual cattle and sheep fair here, held about the middle of September, whereto as many as forty thousand sheep are usually brought for sale. During this fair, open house is kept by every person in the place, and there is a staple dish of roast beef and pickled cabbage to which every comer is made heartily welcome. While the fair lasts Masham is a place of bustle and excitement; when it is over the little town settles down to the quietest and most monotonous of existences, save on market days, when the folk from the dales come in to give it a momentary increase of life.

The chief attraction of the village of Well, which lies a little to the east of Masham, on the road leading to Bedale, is in the strikingly magnificent view of a considerable part of the Vale of Mowbray, which is presented to the traveller from the high ground above its outskirts. Although the Vale of Mowbray is mainly a vast expanse of plain-like character, it is so richly wooded, so luxuriant in its vegetation, and so eminently pastoral in its entire aspect, that a wide prospect of it is calculated to give the lover of fine landscape even more pleasure than might be derived from a wilder scene. The prospect afforded hereabouts is one of those pictures which can only be found in England—a picture of an English farming village, with an ancient church and old-fashioned farmsteads lying in the foreground, surrounded





by clumps of elms, chestnuts, and beeches, with thick orchards and high hedgerows clustering beneath and stretching away into the distance, until the green and grey and brown of the earth melts into the hazy tones of the horizon, a wide expanse of wood and meadow with other towers and gables lifting themselves skyward at intervals. Nor is the village street of Well less suggestive of rural life than this prospect of the Vale of Mowbray. It is one of those quiet, dreamy streets wherein the traveller expects and is sure to find a woman or two standing at the cottage doors, an ancient gaffer sitting half asleep in the sun, pigeons fluttering about the roofs of the houses, and a brood of chickens in undisturbed possession of the roadway. Beyond all these evidences of rural life, however, Well possesses some interesting historical associations. There are here some remains which would seem to show that this village—named *Welle* by the Saxons because of its fine supply of water—was used by the Romans as a pleasure-resort, and was the site of numerous villas, with their accompanying baths and temples. The church, which consists of nave, chancel, north and south aisles, and a fine tower, is partly Norman, and contains some interesting monuments and effigies, amongst them that of John Neville, last of the Barons Latimer. The most interesting matter at Well, perhaps, is the kitchen of the farmhouse which was once a Hospital of St. Michael, founded in the fourteenth century by Ralph de Neville for the benefit of twenty-four poor folk of both sexes, whose needs, spiritual and material, were attended to by a governor and two ecclesiastics. Practically little of the original establishment remains, except the large apartment now used as the farmhouse kitchen, which is arched and vaulted, and very similar in its architectural features to the *Domus Conversorum* at Fountains Abbey.

The country lying between Well and the quiet little market-town of Bedale is chiefly remarkable for the possession of an ancient castle and a modern country seat. When Leland came into these parts he found Snape Castle "a goodly castel, in a valley, . . . and two or three parkes, welle wooded." The castle is now almost entirely a ruin, but still full of interest, and the parks have merged themselves into the fine domain of Thorpe Perrow, the seat of the family of Milbank. The house at Thorpe Perrow is of considerable size and handsome architecture, but modern; the old castle just outside the boundaries of its park, however, contains many objects of antiquity and interest. It was originally built by the Fitz-Randolphs, and afterwards occupied by the Earls of Exeter. The Latimers restored and largely rebuilt it during the reign of Henry VII., and part of the south front is still used as a farmhouse, though the north and the rest of the building is little more than a shell. There is here some fine old oak, some excellent carving, and some tapestry. In the chapel, which, after it had been used as a granary for two or three centuries, was completely restored some years ago, there are the last remains of what was evidently a very richly decorated ceiling. It was in this chapel, if local tradition be

true, that Catherine Parr, afterwards wife of Henry VIII., was married to her first husband, Lord Latimer.

Bedale resembles many another small market-borough of the North in the fact that it is essentially a town of one street. The traveller's first im-



*Thorpe Perrow.*

pression of it as he enters from the southward by way of the pleasant valley leading from Thorpe Perrow is one of pleasurable anticipation. The long, wide street, never very bustling or much occupied even on market or fair day, the quaint, red-tiled houses on either side, the old-fashioned, comfortable-looking inns, suggestive somehow of the days when railways and telegraphs were not in existence, the market-cross and the massive tower of the imposing church—all these things serve to compose a picture of the typical market-town of the north country. Looked at more closely, the eye perceives that the touch of modernity has fallen on Bedale even as on most other places. There is a railway station on the slope of the hill rising to the north-east, and a telegraph-office in the main street, and there are signs of modern industry in the town, while one of its finest and most interesting landmarks, the Old Moot Hall, which stood on the west side of the market-cross, has now disappeared. It is little less interesting as a town, however, because of this blending of the modern and the ancient. There was here at one time a castle, founded by one of the Fitz-Alans, the heads of whose house were Earls of Richmond. There is now no trace of it remaining, but it is commonly held to have stood somewhere about the site of the present hall, and therefore in close neighbourhood of the church. Brian Fitz-Alan, said to be founder of both castle and church, is commemorated in the latter by an imposing monument, which stands at the foot of the

northern buttress of the tower, and supports effigies of himself and his lady. An inscription records that Sir Brian Fitz-Alan was Earl of Arundel and Viceroy of Scotland during the reign of Edward I. At the foot of the southern buttress there are two other effigies of knights in armour. Beyond these monuments and some imposing modern ones the church possesses several other interesting features. As viewed from the head of the town street, it presents a striking and massive appearance. It consists of nave, north and south aisles, and chancel, with a tower at the west end, and though the entire edifice is very imposing, the tower is particularly remarkable for the strength and beauty of its proportions. It is, indeed, more like the keep of a castle than the tower of a church, and that it was at some period used by the townsfolk as a stronghold seems to be proved by the existence, at the entrance to its stairway, of provision for a portcullis. Interiorly the church is as handsome as it is seen from without, and the pointed arches which divide the north aisle from the nave are of singular beauty and distinction. There is a small crypt here in the south-east corner of the chancel, in which there are some fragments of an ancient cross, probably Saxon in origin, and there are other fragments of similar antiquity built into the wall of the vestry.

The country lying between Bedale and Kilgrim Bridge, by which the traveller will gain the south side of the Ure in his journeying to Jervaux Abbey, is entirely given up to rural pursuits, and is closely akin in scenery to that of the lower stretches of the Vale of Mowbray. Its villages and hamlets are quiet, sleepy places, wherein the tide of life moves along with the peaceful regularity which seems strange to the dweller amidst cities. It is scarcely conceivable as one passes along its quiet roads and winding by-lanes that anything ever occurs amongst such calm solitudes of a nature likely to disturb the folk who live in them—so full of peace are the woods and meadows, and the slopes which descend, now gently, now with sudden impetuosity, to the valley of the Ure. That a certain amount of superstition still exists amongst the folk of this district is evidenced by the fact that some of them possess at least a shy belief in the origin of Kilgrim Bridge. The story of the building of this bridge is precisely that told of many bridges in the North of England. It is said that the inhabitants of this district had several times built bridges at this particular spot, only to see them swept away by sudden floodings of the Ure, and that at last they were approached by the Devil, who offered to build them a bridge which should endure, presumably, for ever, on the slight condition that his fee should be the possession of the first living creature to pass over the newly-erected structure. The bridge being built, a shepherd of the neighbourhood, of somewhat sharper wit than his fellows, swam the river, and then whistled his dog from the other side. The dog, of course, fell a victim to the Evil One, and the sole value of the story as it relates to this particular bridge lies in the fact that the dog's name was Grim. Hence the

bridge's name—Kill Grim, or Kilgrim Bridge. That this is a piece of rustic ingenuity in derivation and explanation seems evident from another fact—that the bridge is often called Kilgram, a variation of spelling which may be more important than it looks.

From the south end of this bridge—near which stands a well-situated house, called Kilgrim Grange—the traveller may easily approach the ruins of Jervaux Abbey by the road leading towards East Witton and Coverdale, or by a riverside path which passes into Jervaux Park. Once in sight of the Abbey the beauty of its situation becomes apparent. It stands on the south bank of the Ure at a point where the river has many windings and delightful vagaries. Beyond it, looking westward, Wensleydale opens out full of promise of fine scenery and bold effects; all around it spreads a luxuriantly wooded landscape which is beautiful at all periods of the year, but especially in spring and autumn. If it possesses any particular feature of superiority to the other religious houses of Yorkshire, so far as situation is concerned, it is perhaps in its setting—the grey walls, much more ruinous than those of Bolton, or Fountains, or Rievaulx, and equally so with those of Easby and Eglistone, are framed in a deep mounting of green, and are themselves clothed in a profusion of ivy. As for the chief characteristic of the place as distinguished from other monasteries, that seems to lie in its suggestion of deep peace—nowhere in the county will the traveller find a spot whereon the spirit of rest seems to have laid its hand so willingly as on this green corner of the valley of the Ure.

The Abbey of Jervaux had its beginning during the twelfth century. In 1144, one Peter de Quincy, or Quinciano, a monk of Savigny in Normandy, was ardently desirous of establishing a religious house in the north-west of Yorkshire, where, it had been represented to him, the folk were in much need of religious instruction, and though he encountered some opposition from his superiors, he eventually persuaded Akar Fitz-Bardolph, whom some writers declare to have been the illegitimate brother of Alan, Earl of Richmond, to make him a grant of land at Fors, near Askrigg. Thither Peter proceeded the following year, taking with him twelve other monks of Savigny, equally fervent about the salvation of the wild Yorkshire dalesmen. At Fors this body of thirteen monks set up some rude shelter for themselves: a few cots, built from the loose stone of the fell-side, and ill calculated to shield them from the inclemency of the weather, which they doubtless quickly discovered to be very different to the climate of Normandy. No sooner, however, were the buildings, such as they were, erected, than the country-folk, having no respect for their would-be teachers, fell upon Peter and his monks and destroyed their handiwork, so that the thirteen found themselves upon a day without shelter. Naturally, Peter applied to Savigny for assistance, only to be rebuked by the Abbot for his foolishness in travelling to such outlandish parts. Then he and his brethren went across country to Byland, and there abode, much more

comfortably, for awhile, until Peter—who appears to have been highly endowed with the missionary spirit—persuaded twelve monks of Byland (the old chronicles say nothing as to whether they were the original twelve or a new band of fervent spirits) to go back with him to Fors. Here they appear to have been half-starved, and some of them—always excepting Peter, who was determined to accomplish his pet scheme—utterly disheartened as to their further missionary efforts, until Alan, Earl of Richmond, came upon them one day while he was hunting, and asked their hospitality. One fancies that monks in their condition could have little hospitality to give, but what they had they gave, after which Peter, like a shrewd man, entered into conversation with the great Earl, and no doubt informed him, with much fulness, of how things were with him and his brethren. However that may be, from this conversation began the actual building of Jervaux. This conversation, too, was the end of Peter de Quincy's connection with the project, for the Earl was so struck by his remarkable powers as a conversationalist that he forthwith attached him to his household, comforting the other monks for the loss of their leader by giving them a magnificent grant of land in the valley of the Ure. And so it came about that John de Kingston being chosen Abbot in place of Peter—whose sudden defection seems somewhat unexplainable—the community set about exploring its new possessions and began building the Abbey of Jervaux in 1156. From that time onward the monks seem to have prospered, raising a stately church and all the necessary conventual buildings around it. There are few incidents in the history of the community during the reign of the twenty-three Abbots who ruled it until 1537, when the last Abbot, Adam Sedbergh, was executed at Tyburn for participation in the Pilgrimage of Grace. In the following year the Abbey was handed over to the King's Commissioners, the roof was stripped of its lead, the church despoiled of its relics and valuables, and the walls were partly demolished. The value declared to the Commissioners was, gross, £455, 10s. 5d.; net, £234, 18s. 5d. The site was leased to one Lancelot Harrison, but it eventually passed into the possession of Matthew, Earl of Lennox, and afterwards to the Earls of Ailesbury, one of whom completely explored and excavated the ruins in the early years of the present century, and laid out the grounds which now enclose them.

In Grainge's opinion there is no monastic ruin in the kingdom which presents so complete a ground-plan as Jervaux. The sites of the abbey church, aisles, choir, transepts, and chapter-house, are all easily traceable, and so are those of the Abbot's lodging, the cloisters, refectory, gardens, and kitchens. The length of the church is 270 feet, and though it is in a very ruinous condition, the bases of the columns which divided the nave from the aisles are still remaining. There are several tombstones in the nave in a more or less mutilated condition, and the inscriptions on some of them are quite legible. Before the high altar there is a mutilated



St. Vincent's Abbey

St. Vincent's Abbey  
St. Vincent's Abbey  
St. Vincent's Abbey

St. Vincent's Abbey

effigy of Lord Fitzhugh, who died in 1424, and is here represented as a crusader in link mail. Behind the high altar, under the east window of the south aisle, a stone, marked by a cross and chalice, is inscribed :—

*Hic jacet in tumba Mills. nomine Sallay  
Construxit tabula in turma duodena.*

In the chapter-house, which is the best preserved part of the building, there are several tombstones bearing the names of Abbots of Jervaux. That of the first Abbot, John de Kingston, is still very legible in spite of its great antiquity, and the inscriptions upon the slabs laid over the graves of William, the third Abbot, Eustace, the fifth, and John, the eighth, are quite traceable. The tombstone of Peter de Snape, the seventeenth Abbot, bears a cross, chalice, crosier, and mitre, and the following inscription :—

*Tumba. Pri de—ape Abbatis XVII Jorehal.*

The stone benches used by the brethren in chapter are still remaining in the chapter-house, and so are the fine hexagonal columns of grey marble, six in number, which, headed by richly foliated capitals, supported the groined roof. This is the most interesting portion of the ruins remaining, but the refectory is worthy of note because of its architecture, which displays a good example of the Transitional style. Nothing is to be seen of the cloisters save the bases of a row of pillars which ran down the middle of the space they occupied. Jervaux, indeed, is now little more than a suggestion of its former glories, but so excellently has it been preserved since the Earl of Ailesbury cleared its site of the rubbish accumulated during three centuries of neglect, that it is scarcely second to either Bolton or Fountains in its modern character of the interesting show-place.

### III

There are few towns on the banks of the Ure, rich as that river is in places of historical importance, which are more interesting than Leyburn, not so much for what Leyburn itself is, or has to show, as for its convenience in being the centre-point of a district singularly distinguished for the beauty of its scenery and its wealth of association. It forms an admirable centre for the exploration of Wensleydale, Bishopdale, and Coverdale, and is within close proximity not only to the Abbeys of Jervaux and Coverham, but to the ruins of the once magnificent castles of Middleham and Bolton. It possesses, too, a great charm to the lover of the romantic in the fact that it and its immediate surroundings are closely connected with the life story of Mary, Queen of Scots, who was for some time a prisoner at Bolton Castle, and was recaptured near the town after an attempt to escape from that stronghold. In itself Leyburn is not particularly picturesque or



LEYBURN

attractive, but it is a singularly clean, bright-looking little town, occupying a commanding position on the north bank of the Ure, and being surrounded on all sides by wide stretches of moorland and meadow. It consists principally of a large market-place, from which one or two other streets lead away, and its usual appearance, in common with that of Bedale, is of an eminently peaceful and even sleepy nature. Of the history of Leyburn there is little recorded in the chronicles, but that it was in existence at a very early period is proved by the mention of it in a charter of 1208, whereby John restored to Hugh de Auberville his manor of Leyburn which had come to him from Hubert, Archbishop of Canterbury. History, romance, and picturesque effect, however, are all combined in Leyburn's chief attraction—the long ridge of high ground, rising about a mile to the west of the town, which is known as the Shawl. From this point the traveller commands one of the widest and most beautiful views in Yorkshire, covering a great portion of Wensleydale, the two ruined castles of Bolton and Middleham, the eminence known as Penhill (which is peculiarly interesting to the geologist as being entirely formed of gritstone, while all the rest of the district is of limestone), the romantically-situated village of Wensleydale and the woods surrounding Bolton Hall. About half-way along Leyburn Shawl is a cleft or fissure of somewhat precipitous character formed by towering masses of limestone rock from which trees and shrubs grow plentifully. This is called the "Queen's Gap," and is said to be the exact spot whereat Mary was recaptured after her flight from Bolton Castle. Local tradition has it that the name of the ridge is derived from the circumstance of the queen dropping her shawl at this place as she strove to evade her captors, but the obvious derivation is from *Shalh*, a



scar, or *shaw*, a shaded place. In the immediate vicinity of this ridge there have from time to time been unearthed various traces of a Celtic occupation, particularly in the form of cave dwellings and enclosures, and remains of an even earlier period, pointing presumably to the presence of a very early race, have also been discovered.

North of Leyburn, and amongst the wild and solitary moorlands lying at considerable elevations between the valleys of the Ure and the Swale, there are several scenes and places of interest which it is worth the while of the leisured man to turn aside and see. About two miles out of the town, going northward along the highroad from Leyburn to Richmond, there is a very charming specimen of the old-fashioned English village in Bellerby—a place which appears to have escaped all modernising influences, and is accordingly of a noteworthy distinction. Some three miles farther on, amidst a wide stretch of lonely moorland, is Hart Leap Well, the scene of Wordsworth's well-known poem. The tradition is that a knight who had closely pressed a stag for a considerable distance found it lying dead by the spring at this place, and discovered that it had covered the space between the brow of the hill and the spring in three tremendous leaps ere it fell and died, whereupon he erected pillars on the mark of each footprint, a bower house near the spring, and a basin for the spring itself. Of these things nothing remains but the stones and the well-basin. A lonelier spot it were impossible to find, even amidst these solitudes, and there is still a tradition, similar to that mentioned by Wordsworth in the second part of his poem, that the place is accursed, and that no animal—

“Will wet his lips within that cup of stone.”

The highroad from Leyburn into the somewhat bleak valley of Coverdale leads from the south-east corner of the town directly towards Middleham, crossing the Ure at a little distance before the latter place is reached. Here the traveller comes across one of the most deeply interesting places in the north of Yorkshire. The town itself is of great antiquity, and occupies a fine position on the south bank of the river; its castle was one of the strongest of the North, the home of the Nevilles, and the scene of Lytton's historical romance “The Last of the Barons”; and its church is one of the most interesting in the neighbourhood. Nowadays Middleham is a small place and of little commercial importance, but is known to sportsmen, and especially to those of the north country, as one of the most famous training centres in England, from whose stables several winners of the classic races have gone forth at various times. It possesses therefore numerous features of interest of a widely varying nature.

The Castle of Middleham, which occupies a position of great natural advantage on an eminence south of the town, was founded by Robert Fitz-Ralph, grandson of Ribald, brother of Alan, Earl of Richmond, about the beginning of the thirteenth century, and came into possession of the family



MIDDLEHAM

of Neville by the marriage of his granddaughter Mary with Robert Neville, Lord of Raby. Its first few owners appear to have had no particularly distinguishing qualities, but of one of them Grainge narrates a certain dark story which is highly suggestive of the manners of the Middle Ages:— Being enamoured of a lady in Craven, he and she were discovered by her husband *in flagrante delicto*, with the result that the offender was visited by the enraged spouse with a nameless punishment which shortly put an end to his life, but other authorities relate that punishment fell upon the wrongdoer from the hands of his own wife, who, finding him unfaithful to her, so mutilated him that he died, after which she founded many masses for his soul, and remained true to his memory until her death fifty years afterwards. A great member of this famous family appeared in Ralph Neville, Earl of Westmorland, who enlarged Middleham Castle, obtained market-charters for the town from Richard II., and played a prominent part in the affairs of his time. But Middleham and the Nevilles were at the zenith of their grandeur and glory under the ownership of Richard Neville, Earl of Warwick, known to history as the King-maker. Here he kept a great retinue and much state, and here he frequently entertained Edward IV. with much circumstance and ceremony, though the king was as much a prisoner as a guest. After the death of Warwick, Middleham

passed into possession of his son-in-law, Richard III., who had married the Lady Anne Neville, the King-Maker's daughter and heiress. It is said that the crook-backed king was extremely fond of Middleham, and spent much time within its castle. Here his only son, Edward, was born in 1473, and here he died eleven years later. Richard III. had it in mind to found a college at Middleham, and he made the church collegiate, and raised the rectory to the dignity of a deanery. After Richard's death the history of Middleham declines in interest. It does not seem to have been garrisoned during the Civil War, but the York committee ordered its destruction in 1646—an order which was very imperfectly carried out by means of gunpowder. As the ruins now stand, they give the beholder an impression of great strength. They are in the form of a parallelogram, 210 feet by 175 feet, with a square tower at each angle, excepting that at the south-west, which is semicircular. The original castle forms the central part of the building. Whitaker remarks of this castle that as a specimen of architecture it is "an unique, but not a happy work. The Norman keep, the fortress of the first lords, not being sufficient for the vast trains and princely habits of the Nevilles, was enclosed at no long period before Leland's time by a complete quadrangle, which almost entirely darkened what was dark enough before; and the first structure now stands completely isolated in the centre of a later work." It is still possible to trace a good deal of the moat which surrounded this castle, which is now carefully preserved from further despoliation, and from the exceedingly strong nature of its materials, will probably outlast most of our ancient buildings.

Middleham itself, apart from its castle, is a quaint and interesting place wherein the traveller will find many signs of past importance and prosperity. That it must at some time have been a town of considerable size is proved from the fact that it possesses two crosses, one of which, the Boar Cross, stands a little to the north of the castle. There are several interesting features in connection with the church of Middleham, which is dedicated to Our Lady and St. Alkelda, a saint little known even to ecclesiologists, but whom legend reports to have been a Saxon lady strangled by the Danes during their invasion of this neighbourhood. The church contains some ancient stained glass illustrating her martyrdom, and is said to be built on the spot where she met her death. There was a custom in vogue here at one time of paying the fee farm rents of Middleham on St. Alkelda's tomb, but the stone which represented it is now removed. The most notable monument in the church is one in memory of Robert Thornton, twenty-second Abbot of Jervaux and Dean of Middleham. The late Charles Kingsley was at one time a Canon of Middleham on the foundation originally instituted by Richard III.

It is but a short distance along the first stretches of Coverdale to the ruins of the Premonstratentian Abbey of Coverham. Here ruins and the buildings which have been erected out of ruins are mingled together in some-

what disappointing fashion. The situation of the Abbey, like those of most English religious houses, is charming and delightfully sequestered, and lies on a broad curve of the valley in close proximity to the river. The Premonstratentian Canons were originally established at Swainby, by Helwise, daughter of Ranulph de Glanville, who was Lord Chief Justice of England in the reign of Henry II., and were transferred to Coverham by her son, Ranulph Fitz-Robert, in 1214. It speedily became of some importance, and had considerable possessions, including the lands on both banks of the river Cover, the churches of Coverham, Downholme, Kettlewell, and Sedburgh, and the rectory of Seaham in Durham. The canons suffered very severely, however, from the Scottish raids during the reign of Edward II., and were obliged to have recourse to the king's benevolence, who granted them leave to acquire land of the value of ten marks. When the Abbey came to an end at the time of the Dissolution—Christopher Rokesby then being Abbot—the gross annual revenues were returned at £207, 14s. 7d., and the net at £160, 18s. 3d. The buildings appear to have fallen into a ruinous condition at a very early stage, and numerous topographers of the past century have called attention to the neglected aspect of the whole place. As to the remains of the Abbey they are few and not of great interest—a modern house has been built out of the stone, and a considerable amount of material used for the erection of farm buildings, cowsheds, stables, and so on. There is still left, however, a very fine Norman arch, or gateway, and if the traveller cares to make careful search amongst the masonry about the farm buildings he will find plenty of interesting things in the way of carved stones, principally built into the walls. Some ruinous arches of the nave still remain, and it is possible to make out the outline of the Abbey church and of the cloister quadrangle. On a stone in the wall of the house is an inscription which Grainge deciphered as follows:—

*Mercy, Mercy, Abbas. Anno D'ni M° quingicenti 'o VIII°  
ist' domum felicitas finibit.*

Over the door of a cottage, which the same authority conceives to have been part of the Abbot's lodgings, there is another inscription:—

*Hudsa—Bygo—Abbs—T'ns—Hortfeldi dn. gr.*

The most perfect remains at Coverham, however, are two effigies which stand at the side of a gateway, and are supposed to represent two of the earlier lords of the adjacent castle of Middleham. One of them, much taller than the other, is represented in the attitude of prayer; the lesser figure grasps a sword, and is surrounded by three dogs. Both are in armour, with surcoats, and both are cross-legged. There was a third figure discovered with these two, but it was imperfect.

From Coverham the traveller may, if he is so minded, explore the whole length of Coverdale. It is by no means so pleasing or picturesque

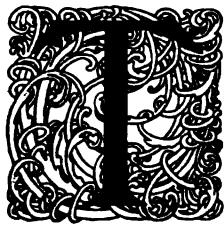
as Wensleydale, and its exploration involves a certain amount of arduous exertion, but there are several matters of interest within its solitudes, and it possesses one great feature of attraction in the magnificence of the views at its western extremity, and particularly from Cover Head, whence there is a remarkable prospect of the valley of the Wharfe in the neighbourhood of Kettlewell. In the churchyard of Coverham there is a curious phenomenon which appears to have been noticed by every itinerant and topographer who has visited the place, viz., that one may stand within its walls while the bells are ringing for service and yet be unable to see anything of the church or to hear a sound of the bells. When it is remembered that the churchyard comprises no more than a single acre of land, this seems very remarkable, but the explanation is simple indeed. A sudden falling away of the ground makes it possible to lose all sight of the church, and the rushing of the river through the weir and wheel of a water-mill drowns the sound of the bells. There is another very picturesque old water-mill at Carlton, near Coverham, and a little way out of Coverham itself, on the road to East Witton, there is a fine old house known as Brathwaite Hall, the rooms of which are panelled with old oak, and where there is a good deal of beautiful carving in oak. But there are many places of this sort in the valley, which is not without still further interest in the fact that it gave a birthplace and a name to Miles Coverdale, Bishop of Exeter, who translated the Bible into English.

## CHAPTER XLIV.

### Wensleydale

CHARM AND VARIETY OF WENSLEYDALE—WENSLEY—BOLTON HALL—  
REDMIRE—BOLTON CASTLE AND MARY QUEEN OF SCOTS—AYSGARTH  
AND AYSGARTH FORCE—BISHOPDALE—ASKRIGG—BAINBRIDGE—THE  
RIVER BAIN AND SEMERWATER—HAWES—HARDRAW SCAR AND COTTER  
FORCE—SOURCE OF THE URE.

#### I



**T**HAT portion of the valley of the Ure known as Wensleydale begins, strictly speaking, about the neighbourhood of Jervaux Abbey, and continues until the source of the river is approached on the west side of Hawes. For charm and variety of scenery there is perhaps no other valley or portion of a valley in Yorkshire which can put forward greater claims to notice. It is distinguished by certain features which are lacking in the most attractive parts of Wharfedale, and if not so bold and striking as the upper valley of the Swale, it has a greater charm for the traveller than the wild scenery of the latter in its possession of a certain homeliness of aspect and wealth of wood and vegetation which is absent from the greater part of Swaledale beyond Reeth. From the village of Wensley, from whence this part of the valley takes its name, to the source of the Ure on the western slopes of Lund's Fell, the traveller will experience a continual variety of scenery, and meet at almost every turn of the road with associations and suggestions of the most interesting nature. At Wensley he will find one of the most charming of English villages, and an ancient church full of historic monuments; at Bolton Castle a fine example of the mediæval stronghold still fragrant with many memories of Mary Queen of Scots; at Aysgarth and Hardraw some of the most impressive waterfalls, or forces, in the county; at Bainbridge the site of a Roman camp; and at Semerwater, the most beautiful of the few lakes which Yorkshire possesses. It is obvious, then, that a journey along the length of Wensleydale, with an occasional deviation into



WENSLEY

the minor valleys of Bishopdale and of the Bain, can scarcely fail to yield both delight and instruction to the lover of the picturesque and the antique. Such a one would do well to explore this beautiful valley either in the later weeks of spring, when the trees are in their first glory, or in the early part of autumn, when they are slowly changing from green to red, yellow, and brown—the heat of summer in a valley like this is somewhat intense, and by no means as pleasant as the cooler airs of May or September.

The village of Wensley, which stands as a sort of sentinel in the mouth of the dale bearing its name, is generally regarded by lovers of the beautiful in nature with an unreserved admiration. It lies in a picturesque, sheltered position on the north bank of the Ure, about a mile and a half to the south-west of Leyburn, which, though a very much larger place, is in its ecclesiastical parish. It is justly famous for its cleanliness, and for the neat appearance of the cottages about its village green, but its great glory is in its church, which is the most important ecclesiastical edifice in the dale, as far as architecture and associations are concerned. Now a small village, Wensley, when its church was built, was a place of some little importance, a market-town, having a weekly market established by royal licence in 1306. It appears to have fallen upon evil times by the beginning of the sixteenth century, for when Leland visited it he found it a somewhat poor-looking place, the houses of which were partly covered with

slate and partly with thatch. Even then, however, it possessed a fair bridge—the forerunner of the present one, which is of considerable width. Within the church, which stands on a slightly elevated position on the banks of the Ure, and in close proximity to the bridge, there are numerous objects of great interest. There is some evidence that there was a church here in the twelfth century, but the present choir appears to be of the time of Henry III., the nave of the time of Henry VII., and the square tower to date from a somewhat later period. In the chancel there is a triple sedilia, Early English in style, which was brought here from Easby Abbey, together with some stalls, wrought about with heraldic devices, which came from the same place. The most notable object in the church is the pew of the Bolton family, which was originally part of the Scrope chantry at Easby, and which is most elaborately ornamented, carved, and emblazoned, and exhibits eighteen panels, bearing the names and arms of members of the house of Scrope. In the chancel there is a remarkably fine brass representing a priest in his vestments, which is supposed by some authorities to commemorate Sir Simon de Wenselawe, rector of the parish about the end of the fourteenth century. There is a quantity of elaborate woodwork in the fronts and panels of the pews of this church, and in its vestry are two of the oldest parish registers in the country. The churchyard contains several tombs of architectural interest, and shelters the remains of two persons of some distinction—one, Thomas Maude, a poet, whose work, principally dealing with the beauties of the neighbourhood, deserves more recognition than it has had ; the other, Peter Goldsmith, a native of Leyburn, who was surgeon on board the *Victory* at the battle of Trafalgar, and ministered to Nelson in his last moments.

From the village of Wensley a road leads through Bolton Park, in the direction of Redmire, passing Bolton Hall by the way, and affording a good view of a house which is more remarkable for the beauty of its situation, and for certain associations connected with it than for its pretensions to architectural distinction. It was built about 1678 by the eccentric Duke of Bolton—then Marquis of Winchelsea—who had come into possession of the lands of the Scropes by his marriage with Mary, the only surviving child of Emanuel, the last Lord Scrope of Bolton Castle, and who found the ancient home of his wife's forefathers no longer tenable. Of this Duke of Bolton some curious stories are told. It is said that he had a perfect passion for sitting long hours over his dinner-table, and that his unfortunate guests were at times obliged to spend twelve hours at the board, since he would allow none to rise until he gave the signal. As some compensation, however, he made no objection if a wearied diner went to sleep at table. He was also fond of going out with his hounds at night, and would hunt steadily through the dark hours, employing a small army of torch-bearers to throw the necessary light upon the woods and fields through which he and his pack took their way. The park in which



this extraordinary individual built his house—now the seat of the Right Hon. Lord Bolton (*cr.* 1797)—is luxuriously wooded all the way from Wensley to Redmire, a pretty village on its western side, where there is a diminutive and ancient church with a good deal of Norman work in its architecture, and several rustic dwellings of picturesque appearance.

One of the most interesting matters in connection with Bolton Castle, which occupies a commanding and eminently striking position on the north bank of the valley at a short distance from Redmire, from whence it may be reached by a convenient bypath, is that it is the only one now left of all the prison-houses in which Mary Queen of Scots spent her captivity in England. From a first glimpse of it one can well imagine that the royal prisoner must have experienced some feeling of dismay when she was brought here and entrusted to the custody of Lord and Lady Scrope. Even in its present condition Bolton Castle is a grim fortress—stout, forbidding, apparently impregnable. It was built by Richard, the first Lord Scrope, in the reign of Richard II., and Leland says that the cost was eighteen thousand marks, a sum equal to £12,000. He also remarks that the timber necessary to its erection was brought from the forest of Engleby in Cumberland, “by dyvers draughts of oxen layde by the waye to carry it from place to place, until it came to Bolton.” When completed, the castle was somewhat irregular in shape, its curtain walls, 7 feet in thickness, measuring 184 feet on the south, 187 feet on the north, 131 feet on the west, and 125 feet on the east side. At each angle there was a tower, each about 96 feet in height, and of these all, save that at the north-east corner, are still standing. Within there is a courtyard, 96 feet by 52 feet, the grand entrance to which is in the east curtain, near the south tower. The massive portcullis which defended this is now gone. Further security was given to the castle by double portcullises over each of the four doorways which opened into the courtyard, and there was a deep moat on the western side of the quadrilateral. On the north side of the castle there is a dungeon, 13 feet by 9 feet by 8 feet, which is hewn out of the solid rock, entered by a hole cut through the floor overhead and absolutely unlighted. Here remains the iron staple to which prisoners were chained. When Leland visited this place, he appears to have been much struck by the system of conveying smoke away from the hearths. “One thing I much notyd in the haul of Bolton,” he remarks, “how chimneys were conveyed by tunnills made in the syde of the walls, betwixt the lights in the haul. And by this means, and by no covers, is the smoke of the hearthe in the haul wonder strangely conveyed.” He also makes mention of a clock which he saw there—“a fair clock, *cum motu solis et lunae*,” and seems generally to have been somewhat astonished, from which one gathers that the Scropes of that time ordered their house after an advanced fashion.

It was about the middle of July 1568 when Mary Queen of Scots was brought prisoner to Bolton Castle, and she came there with a rather



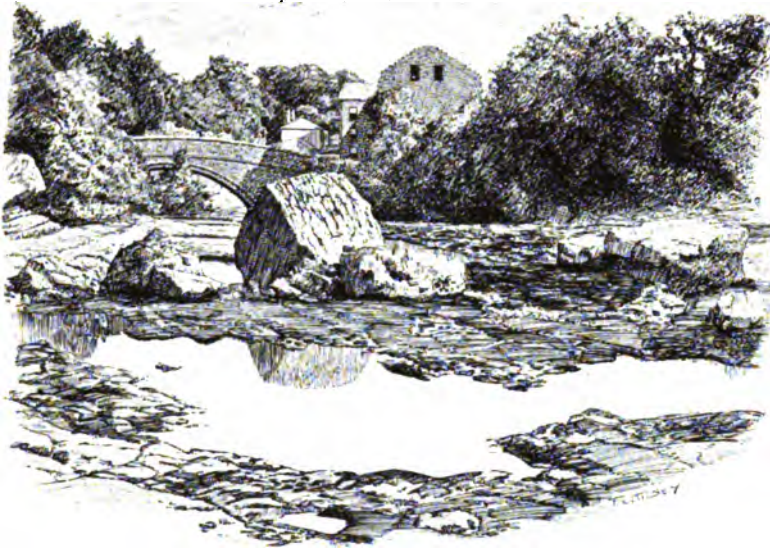
BOLTON CASTLE

numerous retinue. Travelling from Carlisle by way of Appleby, she must have crossed the Westmorland border by the road now running from Kirkby Stephen over Mallerstang Moors to Hawes, and so approached her new prison by way of Wensleydale. She had with her six personal attendants, twenty carriage and twenty-three saddle-horses, and a cavalcade of forty persons, one-half of whom had to be lodged in the village beneath the castle walls. Her arrival, one imagines, and indeed gathers from the contemporary chronicles, must have occasioned some disquietude in the breasts of her custodians. Lady Scrope, who received her, seems to have been unprepared for such onerous tasks as had befallen her, and was obliged to borrow furniture, beds, and linen for the Queen's apartments from Sir George Bowes. However, the ill-fated Queen of Scots was not destined to give much trouble to her gaolers. Her attempt to escape, frustrated by her recapture at the Queen's Gap on Leyburn Shawl, and the visit of the Duke of Norfolk, Lady Scrope's brother, and head of the Catholic party, to Bolton Castle in 1568, frightened Elizabeth into removing her captive into safer keeping, and Mary left Bolton in January 1569 for Tutbury in Staffordshire. The room in which she was confined at Bolton is in the south-west tower, and had two windows, one of which looks westward, the other into the courtyard. There was for a long time a pane of glass in one of these windows on which the Queen was said to have cut her name with a diamond

ring, but this, being removed to Bolton Hall, was accidentally broken. There are, however, in the castle several interesting relics and curiosities, not connected with Mary, but of great value, in the shape of prehistoric remains, Roman antiquities, and similar matters, which were some time ago deposited by Lord Bolton, as the nucleus of a museum, in one of the rooms of the tower in which the Queen was imprisoned, and which have been added to from time to time. From the parapet of this tower extensive views of the surrounding country may be had, and there is a tradition that Mary spent much of her time here. Most of this portion of the castle is in a comparatively good state of repair, for though the place underwent a siege during the Civil War, when Colonel Scrope defended it against the Parliamentarians until he and his men were literally starved into surrender, and though the York committee ordered its demolition to be effected in 1647, nothing in the way of destruction seems to have been wrought against it, and the ravages which have been made in its structure appear to be due only to the work of time.

The road leading from Bolton Castle to Aysgarth rejoins the high-road between Leyburn and the latter place near Redmire, and shortly passes through another Wensleydale village of some note for its picturesque appearance—the village of Carperby. Round about it there are several spots of more than ordinary beauty and interest—Bearpark, a fine old Elizabethan mansion which has been restored; Wood Hall, the seat of the family of Routh, one of whose ancestors, Sir Peter de Routh, was Chief Forester of Wensleydale five hundred years ago; and Thoresby, where many Danish and Saxon relics have been discovered at various times, and which was the birthplace of John de Thoresby, Archbishop of York and Chancellor of England in the fourteenth century. But all these matters fade into comparative insignificance as the traveller draws near the famous falls or forces of Aysgarth, which may justly be said to be somewhat unique in the way of waterfalls, though their appearance varies in accordance with the state of the river, just as that of the Strid near Bolton Priory varies according to the temper of the Wharfe. Pococke, the famous traveller, who made a special journey into Wensleydale about the middle of the last century in order to see Aysgarth Force, remarked of it that it was much finer than any of the cataracts he had so often seen in Egypt, which leads one to suppose that he visited Aysgarth at some time when the Ure was coming down from Lund's Fell with enormous strength and fury. But here, as at many similar places, and notably at the much-talked of and oft-times disappointing Lodore, the effect produced upon the curious sight-seer depends entirely on the state of the river. It is as Professor Phillips remarked long since:—"The Ure, like other northern streams, especially near their source, varies greatly in respect of the quantity of water which it discharges. In floods it is a great, a mighty river, bursting with a prodigious effect through magnificent rocks; but in droughts only a few

gentle rills—the tears of the Naiads—run over the ledges of limestone.” When the Ure is in a flood its vast mass of waters comes roaring and boiling with an almost deafening noise over the long ridges, or terraces, of limestone which form the bed of the river at this point, and the spray which is thrown up by their tumultuous fury is carried high above the surrounding bushes. But whether the river is in flood or not, nothing can



AYSGARTH

destroy the remarkable beauty of the scenery which surrounds these cataracts. At the point where Aysgarth bridge, a single span thrown across the river from two natural limestone piers, and Aysgarth church, standing on the south bank of the Ure, come in view, the prospect is one to which no pen and few pencils could possibly do justice. It is one of the most beautiful scenes, not only in Wensleydale, or in England, but in the world.

The church of Aysgarth, which stands on a commanding position above the river, and from the churchyard surrounding which there are some delightful views of Wensleydale in the direction of Leyburn, is generally held to take almost equal rank with that of Wensley in interest and beauty, though modern restoration has taken from it nearly all its original features. It is supposed to have been built in the reign of Henry III., and to have been restored by the monks of Jervaux shortly before the Dissolution, and it was thoroughly renovated and added to about thirty years ago. There are some remains of the original structure in the base of the tower, and a

good deal of Norman masonry is to be found here and there in the walls. The rood screen, a fine piece of ornamental carved work, formerly belonged to Jervaux Abbey, and bears the monogram of the last Abbot, Adam de Sedbergh. There are some curious epitaphs in the churchyard—the following, which appears on the tombstone of one Leonard Wray, who died in 1774, is amusing as showing a deep hatred for Popery:—

“ You who are in health, as once was I,  
Freed from great trouble in the dust does lie,  
Remember this, that you must die,  
May Church and State ever defended be  
From Popish plots, pride and conspiracy.”

There is also in this churchyard the tomb of a centenarian, one Betty Webster, who died in 1896 at the age of 106 years, and whose longevity was no doubt largely due to the fact that Aysgarth lies at an altitude of 800 feet above sea-level, and is justly celebrated for the purity and life-giving properties of its climate.

## II

Bishopdale, which branches off from Wensleydale at a point a little to the east of Aysgarth, is somewhat superior in the character of its scenery and surroundings to its sister valley of Coverdale. It is intersected by a stream called Bishopdale Beck, which joins another tributary of the Ure, named Walden Beck, near West Burton, a picturesque and delightfully situated village above which, to the eastward, rises Penhill Beacon (1683 feet), a hill which forms a conspicuous landmark in the neighbouring prospects of Wensleydale. Although West Burton, strictly speaking, is not within Bishopdale, it is well worth the traveller's while to turn aside to see it. Its village green, market cross, ancient houses, and general appearance are reminiscent of old English village life, and its surroundings are extremely picturesque. A little way outside the village, on the beck which bears its name, there is a waterfall, situated among charming surroundings, caused by the falling of the stream over a limestone cliff which is embowered amidst trees. The streams which flow through Bishopdale and its adjacent glens are somewhat remarkable for their waterfalls and cascades, most of which are ideally situated. At a little distance from the source of Bishopdale Beck it receives the waters of Foss Gill, a stream which descends from the high ground between The Stake (1812 feet) and Stake Fell (1760 feet), and pours itself into the valley beneath over a series of fourteen falls, varying from 10 to 50 feet in height. The dale is remarkable, too, for its picturesque and ancient farmsteads, some of which bear dates of considerable antiquity. Thoraby, a village near the foot of the dale, has a history going back to the times of Edward the Confessor. Here the Lords of Rokeby once had a house, which is now converted into a farmstead, and

here there is a bridge bearing a curious Latin inscription which sets forth its dedication to the great Duke of Wellington, and refers to the dangerous character of the floods which pour down the neighbouring streams. In Heaning Gill, a wooded glen close to Thoraby, there is a series of cascades known as the Silver Chain, which are extremely charming as they wind their way through rock and wood to the valley below. For similar scenes to this, and for the possession of a wealth of rural ease and quietude, Bishopdale is unapproachable amongst the minor Yorkshire valleys. It is one of these retired corners of the earth wherein the lover of natural beauty feels that he must move at leisure, keeping pace with the restful, slow movements of the little world around him.

The highroad which leads from Aysgarth to Askrigg along the north bank of the Ure is to be preferred to that along the south bank, inasmuch as that it passes Nappa Hall, the ancient seat of the once famous family of Metcalfe. Around this house—a fifteenth-century structure with two embattled towers, one of considerable size, and many fine architectural features—several interesting historical and legendary associations are gathered. According to Leland, it was built by Thomas Metcalfe, who bought the site and a then existing house from Lord Scrope. Here during the time she spent in captivity at Bolton Castle, Mary Queen of Scots paid a visit of two days' duration to Sir Christopher Metcalfe—a relaxation which was probably granted by Lord Scrope to his royal prisoner on his own responsibility. Until some years ago the bedstead in which the Queen slept was preserved at Nappa Hall, but it has now been removed, together with most of the old furniture of the house. There is a legend that the house is haunted by the Queen's ghost, and a circumstantial account of its appearance in the great hall was written some time ago by a lady who was visiting the place at the time. The chief charm and value of Nappa, however, lies in its association with the Metcalfe family, which, though long extinct in the direct male line, is still numerous represented in name and in collateral branches in this part of Wensleydale. There are two stories related of this family which are worthy of note. One of them explains the origin of the name, and is to the effect that one of their earliest forbears, till then known as Oswald, was passing through a lonely part of the country in company with a friend named Wilfrid, when they perceived an animal of some size approaching them. Wilfrid, crying out that a lion was upon them, fled in terror, but Oswald boldly advanced and discovered the animal to be a red calf. Upon this story being repeated to the neighbouring folk, Wilfrid received the soubriquet of Light-foot, and Oswald that of Metcalfe, and that there may be some truth in the narrative would seem to be argued from the fact that the arms of the Metcalfes were three red calves. A more dependable and veracious story, however, is that told of Sir Christopher Metcalfe, the host of Mary Queen of Scots, who, being at the time High Sheriff of Yorkshire, attended the

assizes at York in 1556 at the head of a company of three hundred followers, every man of which bore the name of Metcalfe and was mounted on a white horse.

The little town of Askrigg, which lies on the north bank of the Ure, at a little distance upon the river, is very quaint and picturesque in appear-



ASKRIGG

ance, and has a history going back to the Norman Conquest. Its church of St. Oswald dates from the middle of the fifteenth century, but modern restoration has destroyed all its most interesting features. Here, in the chantry of St. Anne, now used for other purposes, was the burial-place of the Metcalfe family, some of the earliest members of which leased considerable lands hereabouts from the Fitz-Hughs, whose power in these parts is shown by a significant entry in a lease of 1463, by which Henry Fitz-Hugh leases certain lands and their tenants to Abraham Metcalfe. The chantry of St. Anne in this church was founded by James Metcalfe during the reign of Edward IV., and the deed sets forth that masses shall be said in it for Metcalfes dead and gone, living and to come, and for the King and Queen, for Richard Neville, Earl of Salisbury, for all the founder's benefactors, and for the souls of all the faithful departed. Near the church is the market-place, in the midst of which is an ancient cross, and near to it a stone into which a ring or staple was fixed for securing the bulls with whose baiting the folk of Askrigg used to amuse themselves in bygone days. Adjacent to this is a quaint old house with projecting gables and mullioned windows, and with a balcony between the gables, which was built by William Thornton in 1678. There was at one time held at this place a fair of much importance which invariably ended in a fight between the men of Uredale and Swaledale, and led to much bloodshed. The town was also at one time noted for its manufacture of clocks

and for the knitting of stockings and hosiery, and if the rhyming chronicle of Drunken Barnaby is to be depended upon, the latter trade must have been its chief stay in the seventeenth century, for he remarks somewhat contemptuously of it that it never possessed either mayor or magistrate, and was inhabited by poor folk who lived by knitting. But however little Askrigg may be noted for its commercial importance, it lies in the midst of exceptionally fine scenery, and forms an admirable centre for visiting some of the most interesting corners of Wensleydale. A little distance outside the town is the site of Fors Abbey—now occupied by the buildings of a farmstead—whereat Peter de Quinciano and his twelve monks of Savigny set up the religious community which eventually found a final and more comfortable resting-place at Jervaux. In close proximity to the town, also, are two more of the many waterfalls of Wensleydale—Mill Gill Force, where the waters of a stream which flows across the wild country south-east of Stag's Fell (2213 feet) pour over a romantically situated cleft of rock 70 feet in height, and Whitfield Force on the same stream, which, though not so high, is not less striking in its charm and beauty.

## III

South of Askrigg and on the opposite bank of the Ure there is another interesting deviation to be made from Wensleydale by passing through Bainbridge and following the course of the river Bain—which bears the local reputation of being the shortest river in England—until its outlet from Semerwater is reached. Bainbridge, a quiet, old-fashioned village, built around a large green, on which still stands the ancient stocks, is probably the oldest place in the neighbourhood, and was the site of the Roman military station of Bracchium. Here the Romans had two camps—a summer camp on Addleborough, the great hill (1564 feet) rising to the south-east of the village, and a winter camp on the slighter eminence of Brough Hill (800 feet) which stands closer to Bainbridge, on its east side. When Camden visited Wensleydale about the end of the sixteenth century part of the entrenchments of the camp on Addleborough were still traceable, but they have now disappeared. Those of the camp on Brough Hill, however, are still plainly visible. About these camps numerous Roman relics and remains have been discovered at various times, and the Roman road which led from them over Cam Fell to the west is still clearly marked. Proof that this part of England was settled long before the coming of the Romans is to be found in the cairn known as Stone Raise, a vast pile of stones 360 feet in circumference, presumed to have covered the remains of a Brigantian chieftain, which forms a conspicuous object on the lonely moors between Addleborough and Stake Fell. An exceedingly ancient custom—dating back to the times of the old Forest Laws—is still kept up at Bainbridge. This is the blowing of a horn at ten o'clock





SEMERWATER

every evening, from the Feast of Holy Rood, September 27th, to Shrovetide. One of the horn-blowers of the present century, James Metcalfe, who died in 1864, at the age of eighty-seven, had been in office for over seventy years, and used a cow's horn which was said to be several hundred years old. Another cow's horn dated back to 1611, but the present horn is an African buffalo's, and its use seems to destroy something of the peculiarly English character of the institution. When it first came into use, however, about thirty years ago, there was an old-fashioned English procession and merry-making in its honour, the most striking features of which were a cavalcade of twelve white horses and two donkeys, finely appavelled, and the horn-blower himself, clad in magnificent doublet, red breeches, white leggings, and an imposing cap and feather—all of which shows that the folk of Bainbridge know the value of pageantry and of keeping up the old-world customs.

The most advantageous method of viewing the country on either side of the Bain is to ascend Addleborough until the extreme summit is reached. From the highest point—where there is a circle of gritstone blocks which Professor Phillips conjectured to be of Druidical origin—the eye falls over one of the most magnificent prospects in the county. All around, stretching away as far as the eye can see, rise long lines of heath-clad hill and mountain, the colours of which in autumn are surpassingly beautiful. At the foot of the hill lies the valley of the Bain, the river a thread of silver amidst the prevalent green, and at its head lies Semerwater, a sheet of

glistening colour in the midst of Raydale, another miniature valley nestling amidst the fells. The chief interest in this wide prospect centres in Semerwater, which is one of the three principal lakes of Yorkshire—the others being Malham Tarn and Hornsea Mere—and by far the most ideally situated. It is really a mountain tarn, rather over one hundred acres in extent, and of a general depth of 45 feet, draining the high ground which rises from its southern extremity by the three becks which run through Raydale, Bardale, and Cragdale. According to a very ancient local tradition, still firmly believed in by numerous folk, its origin was supernatural. Where Semerwater now lies, says the legend, there stood some two thousand years ago (some accounts give the actual date as 45 B.C.) a city of imposing size, with noble buildings and of great wealth. To this city there came one day in winter a poor man of venerable appearance who craved an alms at the door of every house in the place, and was driven from each with refusals and reproaches until there was left but one cottage at which he could seek his last chance of succour. Here he met with charity—the cottage folk took him in, fed, warmed, and housed him, and made him welcome for the night. Next morning he arose, blessed his entertainers, and set forth on his journey towards the hills. But when he had arrived on an eminence outside the city he stretched out his arms in malediction upon it, crying—

“ Semerwater, rise !  
Semerwater, sink !  
Swallow all the town  
Save this lile house  
Where they gave me meat and drink ! ”

Whereupon the earth opened, a great flood of water appeared, and the city of hard-hearted folk disappeared, never to be seen again, though it is said that an occasional glimpse of its towers and spires has been seen by curious and fearful watchers who have gazed patiently through its depths. But Semerwater has many other attractions beyond its beauty and its legend. At its northern edge there is a quaint little place named Countersett, a collection of old, time-worn houses, one of which was a favourite abiding-place of George Fox, the Quaker. There is a tradition that one of the kings stayed in this house when he was hunting in the neighbouring forest, but the story does not say which king it was. Here and at Carr End, at the head of the lake, and at Stalling Busk, a tiny village with one of the smallest of churches, the traveller who loves gabled roofs, stone porches, and mullioned windows will find his affections well satisfied.

From Semerwater the further reaches of Wensleydale may be reached by following the road from Countersett, at the northern end of the lake, or that from Massett, at the southern end. Both roads pass through striking and remarkable scenery, but that from Massett is to be preferred since it leads over the northern slopes of Weather Fell (2015 feet) ere it descends



HAWES

to the little town of Hawes. Between Semerwater and Hawes the land wears many picturesque aspects—the valleys or glens of Bardale and Raydale, stretching southward from Semerwater into the fells, and that through which Duerley Beck runs between Dodd Fell and Weather Fell, are full of striking scenes, and each contains several waterfalls and forces. The slopes of Weather Fell, approaching Hawes, are deeply indented by huge fissures or ravines, through which not infrequently considerable streams of water descend from the heights above. At the foot of the fell is a small village called Gayle, through which the beck runs over a series of miniature falls. Waterfalls, indeed, are hereabouts the commonest feature of the landscape—they are found in every valley and along every stream, and in flood-times the air is murmurous with their sound.

Hawes, said to be the highest market-town in the country, presents a more favourable and imposing appearance when seen from a distance than when viewed at close quarters. Its site is about 800 feet above sea-level, and its surroundings are bold, striking, and remarkable for their wildness of effect. There is little that is distinguished within the town, and the church, which dates from the fifteenth century, when one Sir James Whalley was appointed its incumbent by Richard III., was rebuilt about half a century ago. To see Hawes at its best, or, rather, in its most characteristic state, the traveller should visit it on the occasion of a sheep-fair, or on a market day, when the neighbouring dalesmen congregate in its midst, and sheep by the thousand are driven in from all sides. Perhaps

the most noticeable features of Hawes as seen by the traveller who visits the town on ordinary occasions are the view from the bridge, near which Gayle Beck makes union with the Ure amidst very pleasant surroundings, and the presence in its streets of numbers of beagles.

If Hawes is not in itself a thing of beauty it can boast of having a good deal of beauty in its immediate vicinity. Between it and the last stages of the valley of the Ure the traveller who is not afraid of exploring the wildest and loneliest species of scenery will find his liking for solitude and grandeur satisfied to the full. Before going into the wildernesses—for they are little else—which stretch away from Hawes to the borders of Westmorland, however, the customary visit to the more famous show-place of the district should be duly paid. The show-place of Hawes is Hardraw Scaur, Scar, or Force, a remarkable waterfall near the highroad which leads from Hawes over Buttertubs Pass into Swaledale at Muker. It is situated in the midst of the most picturesque and romantic surroundings, and is formed by the sudden precipitation of the waters of a small beck flowing from the direction of Great Shunnor Fell (2346 feet) over a semicircular cliff of limestone rock 99 feet in height. The scene at this point is at all times wonderful and amazing, not merely because of the precipitous descent of the water, but because of the colours displayed in the great layers of limestone, and in the mosses, ferns, and lichen which line its crevices. After heavy rains, the prospect of Hardraw Scaur is awful in its grandeur. The water pours along the beck above in hurrying volume, and hurls itself over the brink of the cliff with a fury which causes its sound to be heard far away along the valley, and throws up great sheets of vapour in which almost every colour of the rainbow seems to glow. Another waterfall of a quieter nature and more deeply embosomed in trees and foliage than that of Hardraw is to be found at Cotter Force, a little distance away. Here the water flowing from the slopes of Great Shunnor Fell and Lovely Seat pours itself over two or three cascades of no great height into a deeply-shaded pool. Lovers of the wildest solitude might profitably proceed beyond this waterfall into Cotterdale, a valley so lonely that the only road traversing it and leading to its one village is a mere cart-track which seems lost amidst the gaunt, bleak fell-sides.

But everything at the extremity of Wensleydale is bleak, wild, and solitary. Camden, travelling in these parts some centuries ago, seems to have been as much impressed by the wildness and loneliness of the scenery as Defoe was in making his journey over Blackstone Edge towards Halifax. "On the side of the county next to Lancashire," he remarks, "is such a dreary waste and horrid, silent wilderness amongst the mountains, that certain little rivulets that creep here are called by the neighbourhood 'Hell-becks,' *q.d.*, rivers or streams of hell, and especially that at the head of Ure, which runs under a bridge of a single rock in so deep a channel as to strike beholders with terror. In this part the goats, deer,

and stags of extraordinary size, with branching horns, find a secure retreat." The old itinerant was ignorant that the real meaning of *hell* was *clear*, but otherwise his description of the country which surrounds the sources of the Ure is as exact to-day as when he penned it three hundred years since. It is a wild, solitary land, with great fells rising above the sparsely wooded valleys and great ravines dividing mountain from mountain. But wild and lonely as it is, it is not without its charm and its association. It is full of beauty indeed, to those who love great stretches of hilly country across which the shadows may come and go on bright, sunlit days. From its high places the traveller may look forth across vast prospects of hill and dale and on the lonely farmsteads and cottages where the dalesmen live out of the world. And at Hell Gill itself, the "deadly place" of Leland, the "dreadful perpendicular disruption" of Whitaker, the "Stygian rivulet" of Camden, there is a touch of romance, for it was across it, at Devil's Bridge, that Dick Turpin leaped Black Bess, crossing in that leap from Westmorland into Yorkshire, when the constables of the former county had come upon him with a warrant of arrest.




HARDRAW SCAUR

## CHAPTER XLV

### The Lower Swale and its Tributaries

CHARACTER AND COURSE OF THE SWALE—SURROUNDINGS OF ITS JUNCTION WITH THE URE AND OUSE—MYTON: THE SCENE OF THE WHITE BATTLE—SWALESIDE VILLAGES—TOPCLIFFE—A YORKSHIRE ODDITY—COLD OR COD BECK—THIRSK—THE EDGE OF THE HILLS—MOUNT GRACE PRIORY—THE RIVER WISKE—NORTHALLERTON—NORTH AND SOUTH OTTERINGTON—KIRKBY WISKE—BALDERSBY—LEEMING LANE—BOLTON-UPON-SWALE: THE BIRTHPLACE OF HENRY JENKINS—CATTERICK: THE “CATARACTONIUM” OF THE ROMANS—CATTERICK BRIDGE AND ITS ASSOCIATIONS.

HE river Swale, which has a course of nearly seventy-two miles through a tract of remarkably diversified country, rises amidst the wild mountainous scenery on the extreme north-west of the county and flows, with the Ure, into the Ouse at Myton-on-Swale, in the heart of the great plain of York. Its first beginnings are situate amidst scenery so wild, lonely, and bleak that it is little known, and the fells and moorlands which surround them are seldom visited save by the most adventurous. But from its first sources, the gills and becks running from the sides of the great hills which divide Yorkshire from Westmorland, until it is absorbed into the Ouse, the Swale is always deeply interesting. From Muker, the first of the larger centres of population along its banks, to Catterick Bridge, where Swaledale proper may be rightly said to end, the scenery is full of charm and beauty, and at times of sublimity. Ancient villages like Grinton, abbeys and priories like those of Easby, Ellerton, and Marrick, richly-wooded hillsides, and the ever-changing course of the river itself combine to produce those feelings of delight which only a north-country valley can give. Then again, Swaledale possesses what no other Yorkshire dale can boast—the possession of the most picturesquely situated town in England. Nowhere in this country may the seeker after the picturesque and romantic find such a situation as that of Richmond, or such prospects of an old English town as may be had of it from the valley and

the surrounding hills. And though the surroundings of the Swale after Richmond and Easby are passed become somewhat flat and monotonous, the lower reaches of the river as they wind through the heart of the wide vale of York are not without interest and association. The traveller who follows the windings of the Swale and of its two principal tributaries, the river Wiske and the stream known as Cold or Cod Beck, will indeed see a considerable part of Yorkshire and be introduced to the most diversified scenery. No more advantageous fashion of exploring the wide tract of land drained by the lower Swale can be adopted than by following the river from Myton to Topcliffe, thence turning along Cod Beck through Thirsk to the source of the last-named stream on the Osmotherly Moors, and from that point turning southward again by way of another tributary, the Wiske, which rises on the edge of the Cleveland Hills, and after passing Northallerton enters the Swale a few miles north of Topcliffe. From this point the course of the lower Swale itself may be followed to Catterick Bridge, beyond which the character of the river is entirely changed, and its surroundings, instead of being peaceful, flat, and somewhat monotonous, become picturesque, wild, and eminently romantic.

## I

A first view of the river Swale, seen from the neighbourhood of Myton, suggests little of either the romantic or the picturesque. It is at this point a rather sluggish stream, flowing between deep banks, thickly lined with sedge and willow, through the midst of an absolutely flat land—the great Vale of York, which is walled in on the eastern side by the long range of hills extending under various names from Stokesley to Coxwold. Nor is there anything of immediate historic interest in the first surroundings of the Swale, save that Myton, its first village, was the scene of the famous battle afterwards known as the Chapter, or White Battle of Myton, and that at Brafferton, close by, Paulinus is said to have baptized several thousands of converts to Christianity. To-day Myton is very much akin, so far as aspect goes, to the villages which line the Ouse between York and the Humber—a collection of red-tiled houses and cottages set amidst orchards and gardens, with the great house of the place keeping guard over all from the shade of its ancestral trees, which in its case are very tall elms. The church here is old and curious, and is said to have been originally built out of materials brought from Aldborough, close by. But the chief interest in Myton is in its battle, which was fought on September 30, 1319, between the Scottish marauders under Murray and Douglas, and a very curious and remarkable army got together by William de Melton, Archbishop of York, in the ranks of which were found a large percentage of clergy. There was at that time a bridge across the Swale hereabouts, the foundations of which are still traceable at a point not far from the present bridge, and it was

around it that the fight raged most fiercely. When it was over the Scots were masters of the situation, and amongst the thousands of dead who lay in the surrounding meadows were hundreds of priests, who, according to the ancient chroniclers, had been foolish enough to fight in their vestments. It was the presence of so many clergy which caused this engagement to be afterwards spoken of—ironically, one imagines—as the Chapter, or White Battle of Myton. The claims of Brafferton to historic notice is somewhat more ancient than that of Myton, even as Brafferton itself is much more important as a modern centre of population, being a place of some size, with a fine church—the only ancient portion of which is the tower—some good buildings and a few old-fashioned cottages with thatched roofs. Here, it is said, Paulinus, the great Apostle of the North and first Archbishop of York, baptized several thousands of converts. Some writers say that he baptized no less than ten thousand at Brafferton at one time, from which circumstance the Swale was afterwards known as the Jordan of England. But it seems exceedingly probable that this story, though it possesses some foundation of truth, has been materially exaggerated in monkish chronicles.

On the east bank of the Swale, between Brafferton and Topcliffe, there is some interesting country, flat enough, but not devoid of the features which are usually associated with the agricultural districts, and, in the case of at least two villages, not without some important historical associations. There is little in a first glimpse of the small village of Sessay, a typical example of the farming villages hereabouts, to suggest that any history attaches to it. Yet Sessay was once the seat and stronghold of the once powerful family of Darrel, who played a considerable part in the times of Edward II., and one of whom acted as go-between in the discreditable negotiations which were then being carried on with the French under the promptings of Isabella. They were retainers of the Percys, and presumably built the parish church of Sessay, dedicated to St. Cuthbert, and presented by two of them, William and Marmaduke Darrel, to the Abbey of St. Mary in York. Little if anything of the ancient church remains, but the hall of the Darrels is still to be traced in the farmstead known as Church Farm, in the garden of which numerous human remains have been discovered, and where some years ago the curious might see a stone coffin in use as a horse-trough and a holy-water stoup performing the office of a flower-pot. Thormanby, a little distance away to the eastward, was originally a portion of the Angle manor of Easingwold, and was given at the time of the Norman Conquest to Robert Malet, the Chatelain of York, who, if all that the chronicles tell us of him be true, deserved much reward from his master, and appears to have had it. There is an ancient church here with some traces of Norman work, and there was at one time a castle, all particulars of which are now lost, though there are slight remains of it in the modern building on its site.

From Sessay a pleasant country lane leads towards Topcliffe, the most



picturesquely situated and the most important place on the lower reaches of the Swale. Here, in the angle formed by the meeting of Cod Beck with the greater river, there is a curious eminence known as Maiden Bower, an artificial mound of such size and extent that if local legends be true, and the Percys had a castle here, the latter must have been one of the most remarkable strongholds in the county. There are two moats here, very broad and deep, surrounding high mounds, the inner of which is topped by another mound on which the keep is supposed to have stood. There is not a trace of any portion of the building left, but numerous relics and remains have been found close by. Around this place and Topcliffe itself numerous historical associations centre. From the strength of Maiden Bower it became the rallying-point or resting-place of armies and their leaders, and here several reigning monarchs took up their quarters for a time. It was from Topcliffe that Henry Percy, fourth Earl of Northumberland, was dragged by a mob to Thirsk, there to be violently put to death; it was at Topcliffe, too, that Henry, the fifth Earl, initiated the conspiracy against Elizabeth which resulted in his execution at York in August 1572. Here James I. lodged for a night on his way to London to assume the English Crown, and here, if legend be true, his son Charles I. was handed over to the English Parliament by the Scots in exchange for a sum of one hundred thousand pounds. Whether that be true or not, it is certain that Charles was here more than once, and that he passed through the town, a prisoner in charge of the Scottish army, in 1646.

Once a town of some size, Topcliffe is still a noticeable and important village. Approached from the south, it presents an inviting and picturesque appearance, with its ancient church standing on an eminence above the river and its grey-walled bridge, and the red-tiled, quaint houses which rise up the slope going northward. It is one of those quiet, sleepy old places which in some insinuating way or other suggest by their mere appearance that they were once of much more importance than they are now. It possesses two survivals of antiquity in its old market cross, and in its fine church of St. Columba, some parts of which are of great age, and probably the last remains of the church which existed here previous to the Norman Conquest. As it now stands it consists of a nave, north aisle, chancel, porch, and tower, a chantry chapel sacred to the Percys having disappeared. The north aisle is divided from the nave by a series of octagonal pillars surmounted by pointed arches of semi-Norman style, and there are some interesting sedilia and a piscina, all very ancient, in the chancel. The most notable monument in the church is a very fine brass in the south aisle, which presents the effigies of Thomas de Topcliffe and his wife, and is dated 1391. These worthies were members of a family connected by marriage with the Percys, and Thomas, from the character of the garb in which he is depicted—a mantle and long tunic—appears to have been a civilian. Few monumental brasses in the county are in finer preservation than this, or so remarkable for artistic beauty.

In his entertaining work on "Yorkshire Oddities," Mr. Baring-Gould gives an account of a former inhabitant of Topcliffe, whom he speaks of under the name of Old John Mealy-Face. He was born here in 1784, and died in 1868, having had three wives. His celebrity appears to have



been gained chiefly on account of his dry wit and readiness of repartee, of which Mr. Baring-Gould quotes various examples. John's soubriquet of Mealy-Face was gained in this way:—He was noted for his mean and penurious habits, and made a point of cutting down his household expenses to the lowest possible amount. One of his wives was accustomed to bake a loaf of bread during his absence, so that when the pangs of hunger became too severe she might take a slice from it to assuage them. John discovered this and was mightily grieved. From that time forward, whenever business necessitated his absence from home, he went to the flour-bin before leaving and pressed his face into the flour, so that on his return he might replace it in the depression thus caused and detect any peculation on his spouse's part. Many quaint stories are told of his powers of repartee. On one occasion a clergyman informed him that he was about to leave his present cure, the Lord having called him to work in another vineyard. John drily inquired if the new work was to produce a better wage. The clergyman replied that it was a better living by a hundred pounds a year, whereupon John observed that he had thought so, or the Lord might have called till He had been hoarse and even then the clergyman would not have heard.

The stream known as Cod Beck, which runs into the Swale at a point a little south of Topcliffe, is chiefly interesting as opening up the country to the north-east, and as leading to the little market-town of Thirsk. Along its banks on either side there is little of interest until Thirsk is reached, saving the presence of the tumulus at Sowerby, close by Thirsk, which is locally known as Pudding-Pie Hill. There was formerly a superstition that this mound was the abode of fairies, and that their presence might be made manifest by the performance of certain rites, but careful excavation, undertaken in 1855, revealed the remains of several bodies, and of a number of relics of antiquity. The most interesting discovery was that of the skeleton of a man of superior stature, whose arms and legs were crossed, and who was presumably a crusader. A shield had rested on his breast, but only the central boss remained, and by his side lay the handle of his sword. Here too were found the bones of several animals, together with urns, coins, and other relics, and the character of the discoveries leaves little doubt that the mound was the burial-place of an Angle chieftain, and of members of his family.

Thirsk, which lies a little distance from Sowerby and is intersected by Cod Beck, is one of those quiet, sleepy little market-towns which possess a good deal of interest and historical association without seeming to show or at any rate to boast of it. Its houses, built in irregular, straggling streets, are chiefly of the red brick which is so largely used throughout the flat land lying between Goole and the northern border, but there are some quaint old buildings in its peaceful market-place which are sufficiently antique to please the most exacting taste. Its situation is pleasant, and the neighbourhood of the Hambleton Hills gives it a further charm when viewed from the west. There are two portions of the town: Old Thirsk, lying on a slight slope in the west side of the stream; and New Thirsk, situate on flat ground on the east side. There was here at one time a strong castle, originally founded in the tenth century, and afterwards one of the strongholds of the great Roger de Mowbray, by whom it was surrendered to Henry II. in 1174. It was destroyed a few years later, and the only traces of it now remaining must be looked for in the supposed lines of the moat and ramparts which are pointed out to strangers. It is very probable that the present market-place was enclosed in this castle, the name of which is still preserved in Castle Yard. Many of the more ancient things of Thirsk have now disappeared. There used to be an elm-tree here under which Henry Percy, after being dragged from Topcliffe, was done to death, but it came to its end—destroyed by fire out of pure malice, it is said—about 1820, and there was a chantry chapel, founded by William de Mowbray about the end of the twelfth century, the site of which is now called St. James's Green. The ancient hall, or manor-house, a picturesque old place near the parish church, is still suggestive of bygone days, but the ancient Tolbooth, which stood in the

market-place, near the Cross, was pulled down sixty years ago. It is said that the parish church, which stands in a commanding situation to the north of New Thirsk, was originally built out of the material got from the destruction of Roger de Mowbray's castle. The prevailing character of its architecture is Perpendicular, and it is much battlemented and buttressed, and possesses quite a wealth of curious and ugly gargoyles, corbels, and grotesques. It has no particularly interesting monuments, but amongst its four bells there is one, said to have been brought from



Fountains Abbey at the time of the Dissolution, which is singularly sweet and powerful in tone.

As a market-town Thirsk has a long and interesting history. It was at one time famous for its hand-loom weaving, but the introduction of machinery put an end to that. It seems to have been a centre of distribution of produce a century ago, and Bigland says that at its weekly Monday market large quantities of butter, eggs, poultry, and farm produce were bought up by middlemen to be sold again to the retailers of the large towns of the West Riding. It was liberally provided with fairs at which such diverse goods as horned cattle, toys, leather, sheep, and woollen cloths were specially provided for. Its folk now devote themselves chiefly to the making of leather and saddlery, but the bringing of one of our most important lines of railway to its very door has done little to alter its old-world quietude, and sober, steady fashion of pursuing its peaceful avocations. Old Thirsk, in the ancient days, was a borough by prescription, and returned two members to Parliament. The conditions under which these

members were returned sound somewhat curious when heard of nowadays. The right of election was vested in fifty burgage tenements, of which forty-nine belonged to one proprietor, "though they are occasionally conveyed to several of his friends," naively observes an itinerant of a hundred years ago, "for the purpose of voting only, as he receives the rents and profits." The method of election was to assemble under the elm-tree beneath which Henry Percy met his death, and there to choose the two members. That this privilege was not properly esteemed by the folk of Thirsk in mediæval times appears from the fact that between the time of Edward I. and the last Parliament of Edward VI. they sent nobody to represent them, and that the High Sheriff of Yorkshire found it necessary at last to remonstrate with them as to the performance of their just duty. With the passing of the Reform Act in 1832, however, Old Thirsk (and the gentleman possessed of the forty-nine burgage tenements) lost its privilege, and now shares one member in common with all the towns and villages of the Thirsk and Malton Division.

After passing through Thirsk, the Cod Beck, into which the traveller will find several smaller streams, rivulets, and becks running from the hills on his east at frequent intervals, winds along through the country at the foot of the North York Moors in a pleasant and picturesque fashion. Its surroundings are well-wooded, its banks verdurous, and the meadows beyond them rich and well stocked with cattle, and the blue slopes of the Hambleton Hills are delightful as a background to the landscape below. Between Thirsk and Osmotherley there are few villages along the direct route of the beck or on the highroad which runs parallel with it and connects the two places, but those of South and North Kilvington are somewhat interesting for their possession of an Early English church with a fine Norman chancel arch—situate in the first named—and of an ancient moated hall. A little distance from North Kilvington is the ancient seat of the Scropes of Masham, Upsal Castle, which is so well situated as to command a view which is popularly said to extend from York Minster to Richmond Castle, and from the mouth of the Tees to the hills about Coxwold—a prospect of surprising breadth and magnificence. Also a little north of North Kilvington, and on the west bank of Cod Beck lies an ancient Roman station, Thornton-le-street, where a considerable number of Roman remains have been found at various times. From this point going towards Osmotherley the bold lines and deep ravines of the Hambleton Hills come into view as Cod Beck creeps nearer to their lower slopes. Save for its picturesque situation there is little in Osmotherley that is of great interest, but its immediate surroundings are of great beauty. Here the eastern extremity of the great vale of York is absorbed into the hills which spread over the whole land from this point nearly to the sea-coast, and here Cod Beck has its source in a quiet corner of the purple moors.



## II

The river Wiske rises, like its inferior co-tributary, Cod Beck, amidst very romantic and pleasant surroundings, and not far away from one of the least known but not least interesting of the minor religious houses of Yorkshire—the Carthusian Priory of Mount Grace, the remains of which are said to be the most perfect of those still in existence of the nine houses which the Order possessed in England. The earliest Carthusian monastery in this country was that founded at Witham in Somersetshire by Henry II. in 1181; the Priory of Mount Grace was founded in 1397 by Thomas de Holland, Lord Wake, and Earl of Kent, half-brother of Richard II., and afterwards Duke of Surrey. It was dedicated to God, to the Blessed Virgin, and to St. Nicholas, was endowed by its founder with the manor of Bordelby, and by Richard II. with lands in Leicester, Dorset, and the Isle of Wight. After Richard II. was deposed in 1399, the Duke of Surrey engaged in a conspiracy against his successor, Henry IV., and was slain at Cirencester in 1400. His remains—save for his head, which was set up on London Bridge—rested in Cirencester Abbey until 1412, when they were removed to Mount Grace for final interment. Further grants in money and land came to the monks of this priory from Henry V., Henry VI., and from private benefactors, and though they were reported to the Crown as being in deep poverty in 1471, they must have recovered

from it very speedily, for at the time of their surrender of the priory to the King's Commissioners in 1539, their net revenue amounted to the considerable sum of £343, 2s. 10½d. From the list of persons then pensioned off there appear to have been twenty-seven inmates of the priory at that time, and of these the Prior was awarded £60 per annum; eight priests, £7 each; eight others, £6, 13s. 6d. each; three novices, £3, 6s. 8d. each; six *conversi* from £2 to £2, 13s. 4d. each, and one *donatus*, £1, 6s. 8d. The house and lands passed by grant of Henry VIII. to Sir James Strangeways, and during the last three centuries has been held at various periods by the families of Ros, Darcy, Lascelles, and Mauleverer.

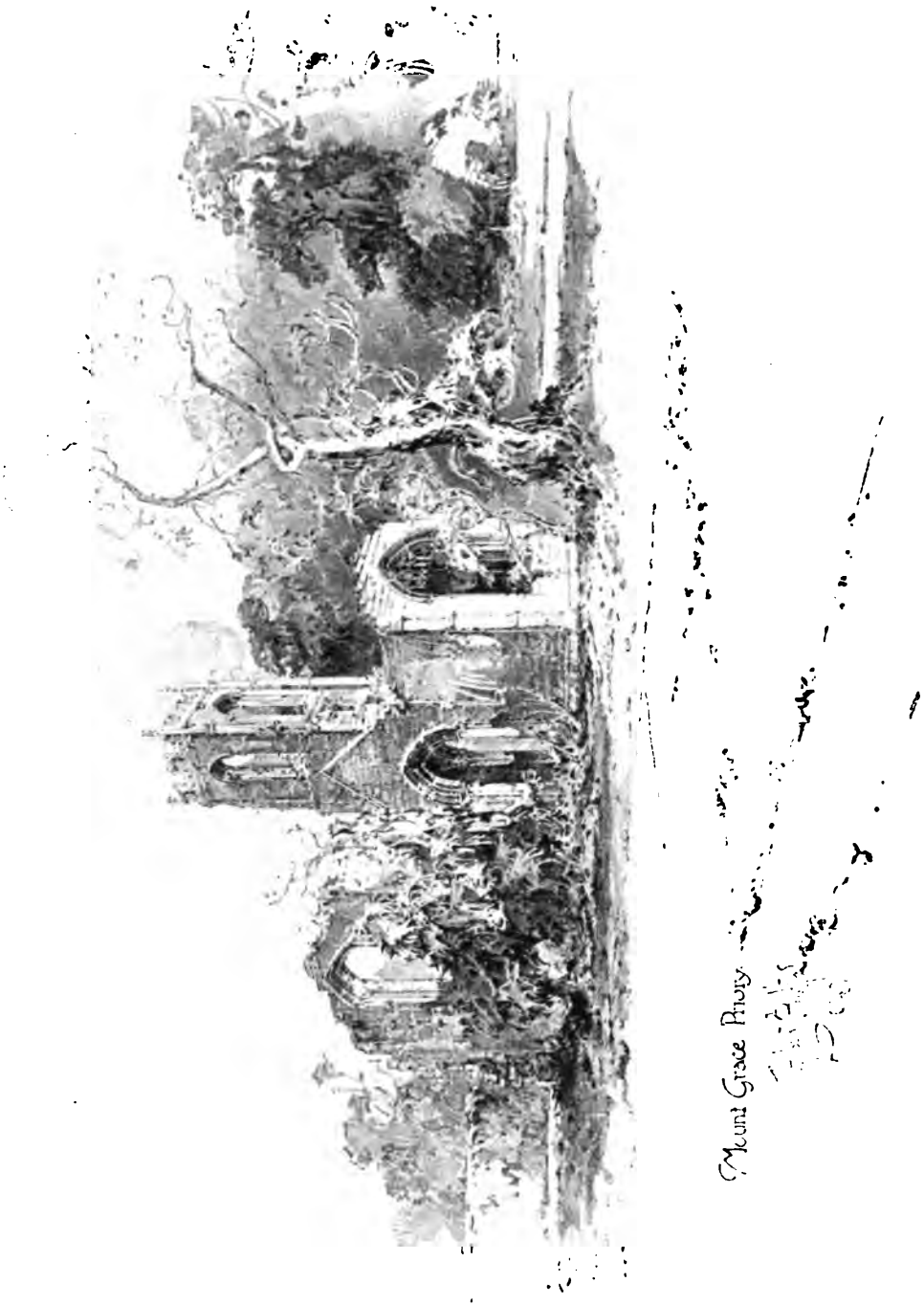
The situation of Mount Grace Priory, like those of the majority of monastic establishments in Yorkshire, is striking and romantic. It is sheltered by the woods of Arncliffe, which close it in on the eastward, and tend, together with the moors above, to give it a lonely and secluded air. The actual remains are somewhat inconsiderable, but still of great interest. The church was cruciform in plan and had a square tower at the intersection. The south wall and the east end of the chancel are gone, but a good deal of the north wall, including two windows of three lights each, still remains, and there is some tracery left in a window of the south transept. There are interesting traces and remains without the church of the conventual buildings—of the refectory, the cells of the monks, each of which, after the usual Carthusian plan, comprised a garden, oratory, living room, bedroom, and pentices, and of the kitchen, where marks of fire in the great chimney are plainly perceivable. Recent excavations have brought to light the base of the high altar of the chapter-house, and of a side chapel with two altars and a tomb. On the dripstone of the door of one cell are the arms of Archbishop Scrope (*circa* Henry IV.), on two doorways at the east side of the south court are the arms of the Gascoignes.

In the State Papers of Henry VIII.'s reign there are some curious documents relating to Mount Grace Priory. From the following (Hen. VIII. S. P. 1047) it appears that a monk named Fletcher—presumably the same Robert Fletcher who at the Dissolution received a pension of £7 per annum—had fallen into the bad habit of seeing visions, and telling other folk of the fact:—

“At Monte Grace ther is a brother that hath revelations, but what his revelations be surlie I can nat tell, but a great name goith vpon hym throughe oute our religion in this realme. I pray God that His revelations may prove better than the maides of Kent. His name (as I here say) is Flecher.”

In the same paper is a remarkable record of the manner of burial of some unfortunate brother—whose name and offence is not stated—who had incurred the wrath of his fellow-monks:—

“Att Monte Grace on of the monckes was beried in a donge hell, for what cause surlie I can natt tell. But howso ever it be the Prior and his Covent wyll defende the



Mount Grace Photo  
1895



cause, as muche as they may; but I thynck verely in my conscience, seying that the churche and churcheyerde is ordened for the bodies of christian people to be beried therein, that it ys nat lafull for them to berie ther brother in a donge hell, for brekeng of a poore seremony, or yete that ony of ther traditions or statutes shodde cause any such a filthy acte to be done."

Two of the brethren resident at Mount Grace at the time when Henry VIII. was coming to open ruptures with the Papal See, appear to have had certain stubborn notions with regard to taking the oath which the King sought to impose upon them. Under date July 1, 1534, the Commissioners appointed to receive the oath thus write to Cromwell respecting the two refractory clerics (Hen. VIII. S. P. vii. 932):—

"JHUS.

"Right worshipfull sir in oure moist hartie maner we hartly recommand vs vnto youre good maisterschipe being desyerous to here of youre good helth, which we besuch Jhu long to conteneue to his pleassour. Sertifyeng youe that wher as we wer apoynted by oure Souereign Lord the kinges commission to take the othes of our said souereign lordes subiects in the perties to vs allottyed, according to the same we have doyn and takyn the othes aforesaid, sauyng twoo monkes which is wtin the Mount Grace and wtin oure circut, one Dan Thomas Leighton and Dan Jeffray Hodeshon, which doith wt stond, and will not make the said othe according vnto oure said Souereign lordes commandment by his commission, bot wt stondis it obstinaty. In so much we have commanded the Priour of the said hows wt thaym, and haith charged hime to keep thaym in saiffe gard unto such tyme as we here forther of oure said Souereign Lordes pleassour therein. Wherefore we hartly besuch your maisterschipe, that it wolde please youe to take so much payn for vs at this oure poore request, as to know of oure said Souereign lordes councell, what shuld be doyn to thaym for the wt standing of the said othe, and that we may haue knowledge by your maisterschipsis letter of the premises, as ye shal be asured of vs boith to our small poower, as knowith our lord, who preserve youe in good helth. Writtyn the first day of July by your assured at all tymes to oure small power.

JAMES STRANGWAYS, K.  
WILLM DANBY.  
WILLM ROKESBY."

What was "doyn to thaym for the wt standing of the said othe" does not appear, but that the difficulty was successfully got over by at least one of them is proven by the fact that the name of Geoffrey Hodgeson appears in the list of those who were pensioned off with £7 per annum in 1539.

There is little of interest (save that which may always be found by lovers of rustic scenery and pastoral life and occupations), along the Wiske as it leaves its source and describes a circuitous route, which at one point brings it almost in touch with the Tees. Here, between the villages of Great Smeaton—a picturesque place with an ancient church from the walls of which there are fine views of the Tees valley and of the vale of York

stretching in front—and East Cowton, the Wiske turns due southward towards Northallerton. On its west bank there are several places of interest. Hutton Bonville, once a seat of the Conyers family; Leake Hall, a seat of the Scropes, rich in old oak and curious relics of bygone days; and Danby Wiske, whose name gains interest from its association with the ancient family of Danby. Nearer Northallerton there is another link with



long-dead times in Romanby, where, until the railway came this way, plainly marked signs of a Roman camp were to be seen, and where numerous relics of the Roman occupation have from time to time been discovered, amongst them a stone which shows that the camp was occupied by a company of the famous Sixth Legion. Northallerton itself, entered by the highroad which runs almost parallel with the Wiske from Great Smeaton over a flat, highly-cultivated tract of country, is at first sight one of the most curiously interesting towns in Yorkshire. It consists of one long main street, which in the centre of the town is of great width, and on either side of which the traveller will see many of those old-fashioned houses and inns which suggest the bustle and jollity of the old coaching-days. How some of the old, roomy, hollow-sounding inns, with their great chambers and vast dining-rooms which are found in roadside towns like Northallerton contrive to keep their doors open is a marvel to folk of the later nineteenth century—in one inn situated in the main street here, there appears to be room and to spare for a regiment of cavalry, and accommodation in its stables for their horses. In company with many other old market-towns of the north it is quiet enough—desolate, even—

on ordinary days, and the bringing of the Great Northern Railway to close quarters with its long main street does not seem to have greatly increased its trade. It has another feature in common with several old English boroughs, in the fact that it returned two members to Parliament from a very early stage of its career, but it differs from most of the towns of its size in another fact—namely, that it escaped the sweeping effects of the Reform Bill of 1832, and enjoyed its privileges until 1885. At the beginning of this century, according to Cooke, the right of voting was vested in the site of the houses adjoining to and forming the main street. "Few or none of the back tenements," he remarks, "are considered as part of the burgage-tenures, or consequently entitled to vote. Some of these tenures now subsist in the form of stables or cow-houses, in which the appearance of our common chimneys are preserved as a memorial of this right; others are let to poor persons at a small annual rent, on condition of their keeping them in repair; and many are totally ruinous and uninhabited." All of which interesting information—coupled with the fact that the Bailiff of the Bishop of Durham, who was Lord of the Manor, was returning-officer—throws some light on the fashion in which members of Parliament were elected in those days.

There seems little doubt that Northallerton was originally a Roman station and that subsequently a Celtic settlement existed on its site. Proofs of the presence of the Romans here have been found in plenty, in the shape of entrenchments, pavements, and coins—that it may have had an existence as a centre of population previous to the Roman occupation is a theory, advanced by Savile and quoted by Camden, to the effect that it is the site of the Brigantian *Camalodunum*. But, apart from conjecture, there is little that is absolutely certain about the early history of Northallerton previous to 1138, when the famous Battle of the Standard was fought, some three miles northward of the town, between the Scots under David and an irregular army raised by the Yorkshire barons, headed by Thurstan, Archbishop of York. The monkish chroniclers who tell the story of this encounter, how the sacred banners of the great Yorkshire saints, Peter of York, John of Beverley, Wilfrith of Ripon, hung in company with that of Cuthbert of Durham from a standard around which the English closed in a massive phalanx, have been much discredited, but the latest researches into the history of those days bears them out. "Baron and freeman," says Green in his "History of the English People," "gathered at York round Archbishop Thurstan and marched to the field of Northallerton to await the foe. The sacred banners of St. Cuthbert of Durham, St. Peter of York, St. John of Beverley, and St. Wilfrid of Ripon hung from a pole fixed in a four-wheeled car which stood in the centre of the host. The first onset of David's host was a terrible one. 'I who wear no armour,' shouted the chief of the Galwegians, 'will go as far this day as any one with breastplate of mail.' His men charged with wild shouts of 'Albin, Albin,' and were

followed by the Norman knighthood of the Lowlands. But their repulse was complete ; the fierce hordes dashed in vain against the close English ranks around the Standard, and the whole army fled in confusion to Carlisle." The field on which this famous encounter took place is a wide, level tract of land known as Cutun Moor, and has yielded of late years certain matters presumably relating to the fight—a coin of Stephen, an amulet fashioned from an agate, a skeleton with a silver coin or medal dependent from the neck, and other similar relics.

The Battle of the Standard was not the only stirring event in the ancient history of Northallerton. The Bishops of Durham had a castle here, and on more than one occasion garrisoned it against various belligerent folk of the times. In 1174 Hugh Pudsey, the fighting Bishop of Durham, surrendered it and his other castles of Norham and Durham to the Crown, and that of Northallerton was ordered to be destroyed. Its materials were used in the erection of a palace for the Bishops of Durham, which Leland saw and describes in a fashion which suggests that there was little difference between castle and palace. In this palace many of the kings found a lodging for the night or an abiding-place for a lengthier period—Edward I., Edward II., Edward III., James I., Charles I., and doubtless others. Charles I. was here, too, in 1647, a prisoner, but on that occasion he stopped at a house immediately facing the east end of the church, the appearance of which is now modern enough, but which was then the residence of the Metcalfes. There is nothing to see of the palace nowadays, and though the church is said to have been originally built by Paulinus, or at that very active saint's instigation, it possesses few features of interest, always excepting its square, battlemented tower, which may be seen for miles around the flat country that encircles it. Once upon a time there were other ecclesiastical institutions here—monasteries of friars, white and black, and a chantry, dedicated to St. Lawrence, but scarce a trace of them remains. The great charm of Northallerton to the modern traveller lies in its long main street, and in the quaint old inns, which only a century ago were busier than the railway stations of to-day, and are now, on ordinary occasions, as quiet and peaceful as the grave.

From Northallerton the Wiske and the highroad run southward to the Swale in almost exactly parallel lines, and the few miles of country which they traverse is peculiarly rich in archæological and historical lore and association. It is not, on first acquaintance, a particularly attractive tract of land: like all the rest of the middle-Yorkshire which extends from the levels of Thorne and Goole to the Tees, it is flat to the verge of monotony. But the traveller need not go far southward from Northallerton without happening across matters which must needs arrest his attention. A few miles from the long-streeted town there are two villages of great interest—North and South Otterington, quiet, rural, peaceful enough places as to their outward aspect, but full of history as any village in the county. Here,

long before the Conqueror built his great keep at York or laid waste the lands betwixt Trent and Tees, Celts, Norsemen, and Angles, one succeeding the other, had habitation ; here, first the great family of Brus, and after it the prince-bishops of Durham, held lordship over the lands lying by the Wiske. Those learned in such matters may trace to-day in South Otterington the entrenchments by means of which the Angles strove to secure some sort of defence for their clan-station. Here, too, may be plainly seen the site of the lordly mansion built by the Talbots in the days of Elizabeth, with its gardens and terraces and ornamental canal. Until half a century ago there was here one of the most venerable churches of the county, and when it was replaced by the present church, evidence of a previous church to the first was discovered beneath the latter's foundations. There can be little doubt that the country hereabouts was under Christian influence at a very early age—possibly before Paulinus made his conversion of Eadwine at York in the seventh century.

Even more interesting than the villages of North and South Otterington is that of Kirkby Wiske, another Norse settlement, whose name—"the church-by-the-water"—sufficiently explains its origin. There is scarcely an acre of ground about this retired and peaceful little place which has not yielded evidences and memorials of long-dead times. It lies at a little distance from the highroad from Northallerton to the south, and the Wiske flows past it at the east end of the ancient church and beneath a stone bridge of some width and dignity. There are few houses in the place, and no one who does not know it would imagine that it had any story attaching to it. Yet here, in 1515, was born Roger Ascham of delectable memory, and here, too, Palliser, sometime Archbishop of Cashel, first drew breath. Not far from the church, a grey, time-worn structure set on a slight eminence

above village and river, there are traces of ancient earthworks, and close by the bridge there were found some years ago the plain evidences of a Celtic encampment. Here, in 1855, when excavations were being made for the purpose of building a new rectory, were discovered a large number of human skeletons, lying almost close to the surface, from which circumstance it would appear that they had been hastily interred,



*South view,  
Northallerton.*

probably after a battle between rival clans. There is little in the outward aspect of Kirkby Wiske to suggest all these evidences of antiquity, but its peaceful situation and the charm of its old church are not the least of the many interesting matters to be found on the banks of the river from which its name is taken and which joins the Swale at a little distance from it.

### III

The reaches of the Swale between Topcliffe and Catterick Bridge cannot by any stretch of the imagination be said to be either picturesque or attractive—certainly there is little in the mere aspect of the country surrounding them which is encouraging to the patient explorer. The river itself is sluggish, and though it turns and twists in a manner which is nothing less than wearying and even exasperating to the traveller who conscientiously follows its banks, there is nothing of the romantic about it—it is the personification of gentle dulness, the most absolute contrast to its own altered character beyond Catterick. It winds through a perfectly level country, the monotony of which is rarely broken by a hillock or an undulation, and its banks, deep and somewhat muddy, are rendered still more uninviting by their want of sylvan surroundings. Willows there are in plenty alongside the Swale at this stage of its career, but their stunted forms become wearying to the eye, which looks, however, in vain for a sign of relief. Nevertheless there are some matters on both banks of the Swale between Topcliffe and Catterick Bridge which are worth turning aside to see. There is a species of model village and a very fine modern church at Baldersby, a village green and an old church, with some Norman work, at Pickhill, and the site of the original home of the monks of Coverham at Swainby, while a prominent landmark for the inhabitants of the surrounding country may be seen in the tall steeple of Ainderby. But everything that is worth seeing on this, the west bank of the Swale, may be seen much more advantageously and comfortably by forsaking that very dull river—for it is dull at this stage—and following the long straight highroad known as Leeming Lane. Here the traveller sets foot on one of the old Roman roads. Its first aspect must needs strike even the superficial observer. It runs straight ahead, so straight that at some points the eye wearies of looking so far into the distance, but in spite of this apparent monotony it is much more pleasant to follow than the vagaries and sluggishness of the river which flanks it on the eastern side.

One of the prettiest villages of this part of the country intersected by the Swale is Scruton, which lies between Leeming Lane and the river, a little northward of the bridge by which the latter is crossed at Morton. It is a place of thick woods, picturesque cottages, and an ancient church, dedicated to that little remembered saint, St. Radegond, but it has a further interest in the fact that in its churchyard, beneath the chancel window, is

the grave of Roger Gale, the famous antiquary and topographer, styled by Whitaker, in the accents of genuine admiration, "the Incomparable." Whitaker speaks of Gale being buried here "without even a mound of earth to mark the human interment in a grave of unusual depth, but by his own order and in the genuine spirit of an antiquary, with the inscription immediately above his remains, which future industry or accident may recover"—a mode of sepulture and of commemoration which, with all respect to Gale and to Whitaker, may be said to possess obvious disadvantages. There is another place of interest on this side of Leeming Lane in the village of Kirkby Fleetham, whose ancient church contains some figures and effigies which are worthy a visit, while the village itself is noteworthy as being one of the few in Yorkshire which still possess a green. On the western side of Leeming Lane at this point the land begins to rise somewhat, and on its first slopes stands Hornby Castle, the seat of the Dukes of Leeds, and once of the Earls of Holderness. It has a somewhat modern appearance, but the greater part of it is Tudor work, and was built by one of the Lords Conyers, probably on the site of the previous castle, which Leland saw and spoke of contemptuously. It is a house of considerable size, with imposing towers and battlements, and the interior apartments are spacious and handsome, and contain a notable collection of works of art. Near the castle there is a fine old Norman church, which contains some interesting effigies, brasses, and monuments.

On the north bank of the Swale, a little to the north-east of Catterick, there are two villages which have an interest in common—Ellerton and Bolton-upon-Swale. It was at Ellerton that Henry Jenkins, the oldest man of whom we have any cognisance in these degenerate centuries, died in 1670, and in the churchyard of Bolton the curious traveller will find his grave, and in the church register the record of his death. It may be noted that Jenkins's age is not mentioned in this entry, which gives the event as follows: "1670. Decem. 9. Henry Jenkins, a very aged and poore man, of Ellerton, buried," but the monument erected to his memory in the churchyard gives it as being 169. The epitaph thereon is somewhat high-flown and rhetorical in its language, and by no means so interesting as the accounts of Jenkins's life. He is said to have been born in the year 1500, to have followed the employment of a fisherman for one hundred and forty years, to have been able to swim across rivers when he was over a century old, and to have worked as a harvester nine years previous to his death. He gave it in evidence on one occasion that he remembered the battle of Flodden Field, and that he must have been a veritable patriarch when this evidence was given seems to be proved by the fact that when he gave it several old men, all of whom were nearly a hundred years old, testified that when they were boys he was a very old man. What changes this man saw in his life of one hundred and sixty-nine years it is almost incredible to conceive—the England which he knew as a boy was a vastly different



CATTERICK BRIDGE

England to that which he knew in his last years. He saw the Suppression of the Religious Houses and the destruction of the Papal Supremacy, the Marian Persecutions and the defeat of the Armada, the overthrow of Absolute Monarchy and the setting up of a short-lived Commonwealth. He lived under six kings—Henry VII., Henry VIII., Edward VI., James I., Charles I., and Charles II.—and two Queens, Mary and Elizabeth, and, as his epitaph truly says, was blessed with a patriarch's health and length of days. If he had been a man of education, endowed with a keen eye and a fine memory, and had moreover mixed in the life of courts and camps, he might in the evening of his days have given the world such a volume of reminiscences as would have remained in evidence for ever. Instead, we hear of him, a veritable patriarch, exerting his last strength in binding sheaves in the corn-fields along the banks of the Swale, near the little village where he was born, and from the neighbourhood of which he seems rarely to have moved, though in his last years he used to talk of having travelled to Northallerton in 1513 in charge of a pack-horse laden with arrows for the use of the English troops then marching northwards against the Scots.

There is a ford across the Swale at Ellerton, and by it Catterick, on the opposite bank of the river, may be easily and pleasantly reached. Leland dismisses Catterick in very curt fashion, remarking of it that it seemed but "a very poore towne," but the modern traveller, after he has had a comprehensive glance at it, will probably feel inclined to throw Leland's opinion to the winds, and to resolve to spend some few hours in looking round about it. In some respects Catterick is largely reminiscent of Ferrybridge and Boroughbridge—it requires but half an eye to



see that it was a place of importance in the old coaching days. Its quaint, old-fashioned inns, with their bow-windows, wide halls, great rooms, and echoing, empty stables and courtyards, were busy enough a century ago—busy enough even sixty years ago. They are quiet now—quiet sometimes as the grave, and the coaches no longer come rattling southward from Scotch Corner or northward from Boroughbridge. But Catterick has a history which began long before those long-lost days of the post-chaise and the mail-coach. Here, nearly two thousand years ago, was the Roman *Cataractonium*, a walled camp of great importance and considerable size. Phillips compares it to that of York, and says that its sides measured 240 by 175 yards, and included an area of nine acres. He thinks that here, before the Roman occupation, there was a British stronghold, bearing the Gaelic name, *Cathair-righ*, the fortified city. Various Roman remains have been discovered here during the last four centuries. One found in 1620 and mentioned in Gough's edition of Camden, was an altar to the tutelary deity of roads and paths, bearing the following inscription:—

DEO QVI VIAS  
 ET SEMITAS COM  
 MENTVS EST. T. IR  
 DAS. SC. F. V. LLM  
 Q. VARIVS VITA  
 LIS ET E COS ARAM  
 SACRAM REST  
 TVIT  
 APRONIANO ET BRA  
 DVA COS

In the *Magna Britannia* there is mention of a bronze vessel which was found here, and which at the time of its discovery was full of Roman coins. It had a holding capacity of twenty-four gallons, and was subsequently used as a vat for brewing purposes. This, with many other Roman remains, such as pavements, pillars, urns, and sculptured figures, which have been discovered here from time to time, are now preserved at Brough Hall, the seat of the Lawson family (*c.* Baronets, 1841), a beautiful old Tudor house which stands in the midst of a finely-wooded park at a little distance from the site of the original station, and which is further distinguished by the possession of several very valuable works of art, including specimens of the genius of Rubens, Lely, and Maas.

In the modern village of Catterick the old inns and the ancient parish church are the chief objects of interest. The Angel Inn is a typical hostelry of the old coaching days, and is so suggestive of them that it would not surprise the imaginative traveller if he found it full of folk in the garb of a hundred years ago, or saw the mail-coach and its horses standing at the door. In the church, which stands on an eminence at the north-west angle of the village, there are several matters worthy of notice. Here is the



THE GEORGE INN, CATTERICK BRIDGE

monument of Walter de Warwicke, Constable of Richmond, who was knighted by John of Gaunt on the battlefield of Najarra, and died in 1371. He was interred in the previous church of Catterick, and his body was removed to the present edifice after it was built in 1412 by Catherine de Burgh, for whom one Richard Cracall acted as architect and mason. There are several brasses in memory of the De Burghs in the church, and the octagonal front bears their arms, with those of the Nevilles, Scropes of Masham, and Fitz-Hughs. Here, too, is the grave of poor Drunken Barnaby, maker of the famous rhyming chronicle which bears his cognomen, and whose real name was Richard Braithwaite. From the churchyard to Catterick Bridge the highway passes along the eastern boundary of the racecourse, where at one time one of the most famous meetings of the north was held. At the bridge itself most travellers will feel sorely tempted to linger. At its southern extremity stands the George Inn, a charming and delightful old-world house; close by is the site of the Roman station; beneath the bridge the Swale, now become a beautiful and romantic river, swirls and eddies over its pebbly bed. Best of all, from the highest point of the bridge the traveller looking westward may see, close at hand, the beginnings of Swaledale, and the promise of the enchanted land which lies round Easby and Richmond.

## CHAPTER XLVI

### Easby and Richmond

ALTERED CHARACTER OF THE SWALE BEYOND CATTERICK—VIEW OF RICHMOND FROM EASBY—ST. AGATHA'S ABBEY, EASBY—EASBY CHURCH—THE SWALE BETWEEN EASBY AND RICHMOND—ROMANTIC SITUATION OF RICHMOND—HISTORY OF RICHMOND CASTLE—LEGEND OF KING ARTHUR AND HIS KNIGHTS—RICHMOND IN HISTORY—RICHMOND MARKET-PLACE AND TRINITY CHURCH—GREY FRIARS—THE PARISH CHURCH—LANDMARKS OF OLD RICHMOND.

#### I



IN turning away from Catterick Bridge by the road leading towards Easby and Richmond the traveller enters upon a stretch of the Swale which may justly be said to be of wonderful charm and loveliness. Up to Catterick Bridge the river runs through a tract of land which can only be called undulating by a slight stretch of imagination—beyond it the country gradually resolves itself into one of the most striking and romantic dales of the North. Something of its altered character is seen in the river itself as one follows its windings from Catterick to Easby by way of Brompton-upon-Swale, a riverside village of quaint houses and cottages of grey stone. Sluggish even to dulness in its lower reaches, the Swale is now a lively and musical river winding along in bold sweeps and sudden curves amidst the most picturesque surroundings. All along its banks there is a continued suggestion of even more loveliness to come, and this promise is abundantly fulfilled when the eye suddenly falls upon the grey ruins of Easby Abbey, rising close above the north bank and set in a frame of rich woodland scenery. There is perhaps no other scene in Yorkshire so powerfully striking as that which the traveller may see from the by-lane which leads from the Abbey to the little hamlet of Easby on the hillside above the ruins. On his left hand lie the crumbling walls of the Abbey and the picturesque little church at their north-east corner, the ancient gateway and the Abbot's Elm, with the Swale flowing at their



AT EASBY ABBEY

feet ; on his right rises a long, thickly-wooded bank which gains in height as it proceeds westward. But the great beauty of this scene lies in the prospect of Richmond, seen in the near distance, its towers and roofs standing clear against the sky and the sharply outlined fell-sides of Swaledale. There are few towns in England of which it is possible to obtain so many striking and wonderful views as of Richmond, which, from its situation, stands high above its surroundings, save on the northward, and none which presents as romantic an appearance. But of all these views, that from the lane which intersects the grounds surrounding Easby Abbey must needs be most impressive to the traveller who sees Richmond for the first time. From this point the town shows itself set high on a hill above the river. The massive four-square keep of its castle, the quaint roofs and gables which surround it, the towers of its churches, and the sharp line of the great rock on which the castle stands, combine to make a picture which no one who sees it for the first time will ever forget, especially if the climatic conditions under which it is seen give to it the richness and warmth of colouring which such a combination of landscape and architecture deserves.

The house of Premonstratensian Canons at Easby, dedicated to St. Agatha, was founded about the middle of the twelfth century by Roald, Constable of Richmond, his endowment mainly consisting of lands at Hudswell, Easby, and Waitwath. It received further benefits from Roger de Mowbray, but its principal patrons were members of the famous family of Scrope,

into whose possession it came by purchase during the reign of Edward III. The first endowment of importance which the Scropes made to Easby Abbey seems to have been that of Richard, son of Henry Scrope, chancellor of Richard II., who, in the sixteenth year of that monarch's reign, obtained the royal licence to grant the Canons of Easby an annual rent or donation of £150, and who further bestowed upon them the manor of Brompton. In return for this the house was to maintain ten religious and two secular additional canons, to provide masses for certain specified folk, and to support twenty poor men in the abbey for ever. The body of Richard Scrope was interred here at his death, and the Abbey became the regular resting-place of his successors for several generations. In 1424 the Abbey and its surroundings were consecrated by the Bishop of Dromore, acting as commissary for the Archbishop of York. In 1534 there was a solemn festivity here in recognition of John Lord Scrope as founder and patron, but in the following year the house came to its end, Robert Bampton, the last abbot, and his seventeen canons then surrendering it to the Commissioners charged with the suppression of monasteries whose incomes were less than £200 per annum. According to their report the net revenue of Easby was then £188, 16s. 2d., but there were so many deductions from this that its value was only £111, 17s. 10d. The particulars of some of these deductions, as cited by Grainge, are quaint and interesting. Once a week there was distributed to five poor and indigent people as much meat and drink as came to the annual value of £2, 15s. 11d.—this being for the benefit of the soul of John Romaine, Archdeacon of Richmond, whose eternal welfare was further sought to be improved by a daily alms to one poor person, amounting in annual value to 15s., a donation of 10d. to ten poor persons on the anniversary of his death, and another of 10s. to certain religious on the same day. They also spent £1, 6s. 8d. a year in giving a loaf of bread, (called the *paysloff*, or Loaf of Peace) a flagon of ale and a portion of food to one pauper every day from the Feast of All Souls to the Feast of the Circumcision—this being doubtless a pious method of helping certain poor folks over the worst of the winter. Then on the Feast of St. Agatha they were required to spend £4 in providing corn and fish for all poor and indigent persons, and a similar sum in providing alms for the poor at the Supper of the Lord, and the two following days. These benefactions must have been sorely missed by the needy folk of the neighbourhood after 1535. On its suppression, the house and lands were leased by the Crown to Lord Scrope for an annual rent of £283, 13s. 1d.

The remains of Easby Abbey are somewhat considerable. On the side nearest Richmond, where the land shelves rather abruptly to the river, the most ancient part of the building shows some signs of falling, but it is on record that it presented the same appearance a century ago. The fireplace and chimney of the great kitchen are plainly discernible, and the refectory—a fine apartment 102 feet in length by 27 in breadth—still possesses its east



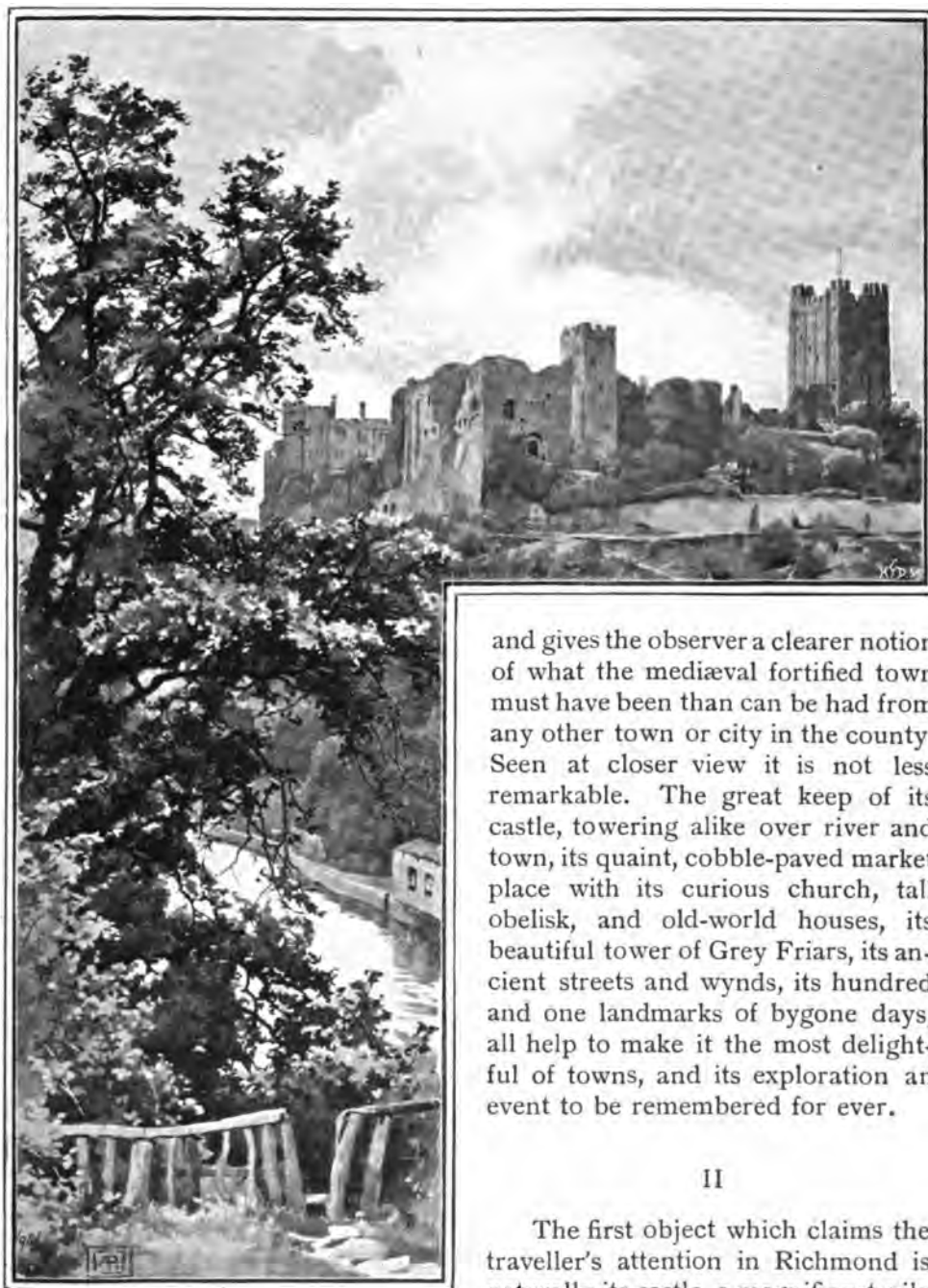
EASBY ABBEY

window, which is of considerable height, and contains some beautiful tracery. There is a large room with pointed arches on the north side of this, which is supposed to have been the chapter-house. At the west end of the refectory there is a doorway of curious Norman architecture which gave admittance to the cloister-court, which lay to the north of this part of the buildings. It is possible to trace the site of the abbey church by the clustered columns and by the walls and windows of the transepts. The Abbot's lodgings lay to the northward of the church, with which they communicated by a doorway in the north aisle. Here there was a chantry chapel of the Scropes, the lattice-work of which was removed to Wensley church at the suppression of the house, and at the same time the Canon's stalls were removed to the parish church of Richmond. The granary of the abbey is still in good repair, and so is the gateway, across the road from the church, in the lower part of which, now used as a shed, there is a fine vaulted roof. Near this, on a delightful stretch of green sward overlooking

the Swale, is an ancient and beautiful tree called the Abbot's Elm, which is doubtless some centuries old.

The little church of Easby, which stands close to the ruins of the Abbey, is not less attractive in its aspect and situation than the grey walls which surround it. There is a trace of Saxon or Early Norman work in the knots which appear above the western windows, but the greater part of the edifice is in the Early English and Perpendicular styles, and probably dates from the thirteenth century. Around the porch are shields, much worn, showing the arms of the families of Scrope, Aske, and Conyers, and it is a somewhat significant fact that the shield of the Scropes is the only memorial left of them at Easby, where several generations of them found a burial-place. There is a Norman font, some ancient mural paintings, partly renovated, three sedilia, and a stone coffin in an arched recess, within the church. A notable feature of its situation is that it departs from ecclesiastical and architectural tradition in its direction, which is more of south to north than of west to east. Its great charm, of course, lies in its immediate surroundings—the grey walls of the Abbey, the richness of the wooded slope to the north, the murmur of the river, the picturesqueness of the old elm-tree and of the little cottage which stands beneath its shade, all combine to make the scene one of ideal beauty.

From the ruins of Easby Abbey a pathway leads to Richmond along the riverside, winding through a long belt of woodland which overhangs the north bank of the Swale. This is one of two charming routes into the town—the other is gained by following the by-lane which transects the Abbey grounds, and regaining the high road from Catterick to Richmond near the almshouses at the top of the hill. There is one advantage in entering Richmond by the highroad in the fact that from it another view of the town and castle is obtainable—this time a view of both are seen from the high ground to the northward. But lovers of river scenery will prefer the path by the Swale if only for the sake of listening to the music which it makes as it flows swiftly over the rocks, boulders, and pebbles which are here strewn thickly about its bed. Nothing of Richmond is seen until the pathway leads into the outskirts of the town, close to the parish church, and little of its general outline can then be seen. But when the steep road to the Market Place has been climbed and the traveller finds himself in the heart of as quaint and romantic a market town as England can show, he will experience a feeling of pleasure which is rarely to be had in taking a first close view of a strange place. There is nothing exactly like, or even approximately like, Richmond anywhere. Although Knaresborough holds it in close rivalry and possesses some features which it lacks, the remarkable grandeur of Richmond's situation gives it an undeniable supremacy over the picturesque town by the Nidd. Principally built upon a promontory stretching out from the hills on the north side of the Swale, Richmond from south, east, or west presents a striking spectacle,



and gives the observer a clearer notion of what the mediæval fortified town must have been than can be had from any other town or city in the county. Seen at closer view it is not less remarkable. The great keep of its castle, towering alike over river and town, its quaint, cobble-paved market place with its curious church, tall obelisk, and old-world houses, its beautiful tower of Grey Friars, its ancient streets and wynds, its hundred and one landmarks of bygone days, all help to make it the most delightful of towns, and its exploration an event to be remembered for ever.

II

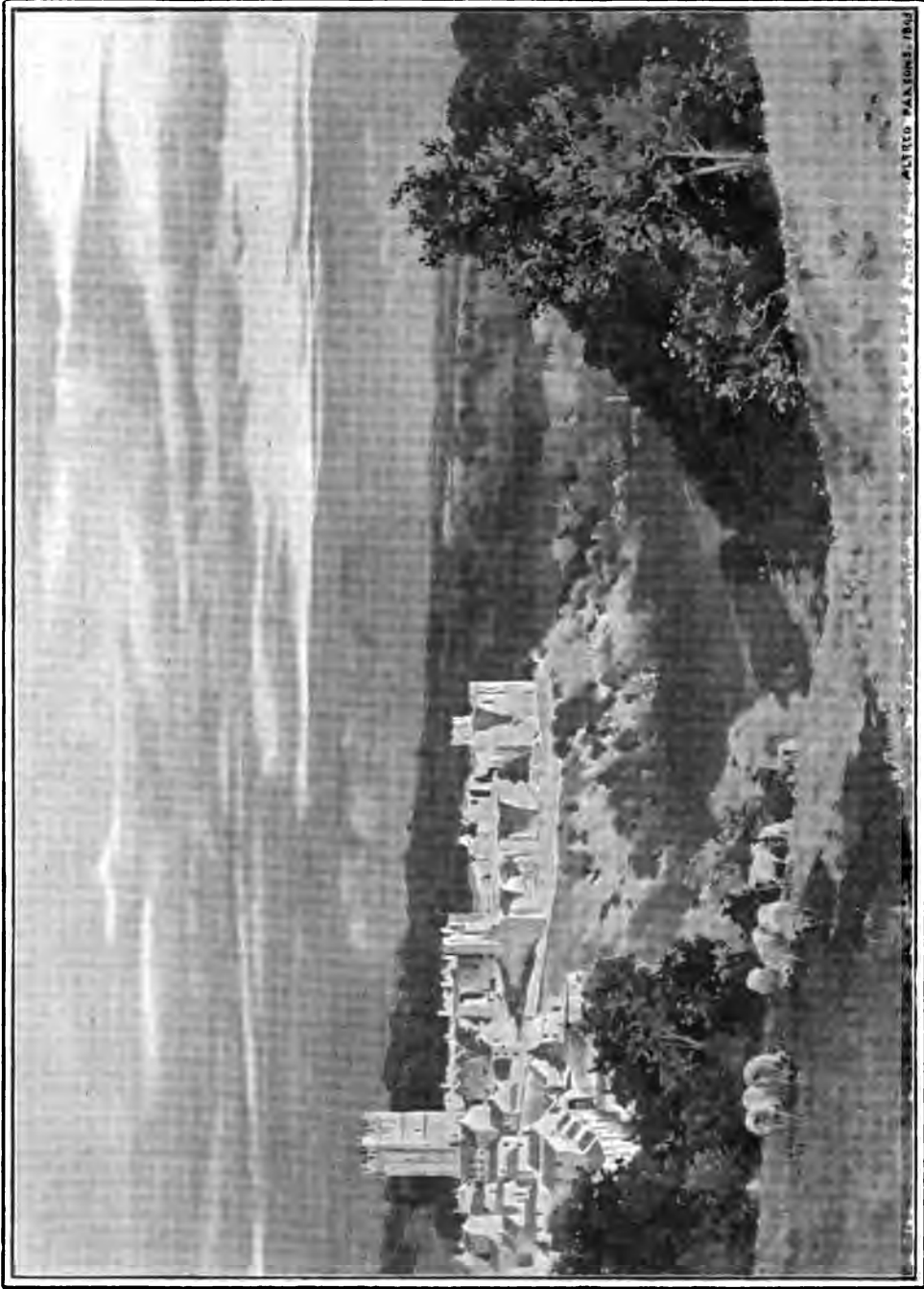
The first object which claims the traveller's attention in Richmond is naturally its castle, a magnificent pile of buildings dominated by a massive

RICHMOND CASTLE FROM THE SOUTH  
VOL. II.



square keep of great size and height, which is built on the summit of a long escarpment of rock rising sharply from the north bank of the Swale. None of the great strongholds of the north occupy a more impregnable position, and few of them were so well fortified. Of vast extent and of exceptional strength, Richmond Castle appears to have been intended by its founder to form not only a residence for himself and his successors but to furnish the means of shelter for vassals and dependants who might have occasion to flee within its walls for protection. So well, too, did the builders who carried out his wishes do their work, that although nearly nine centuries have passed since the castle first rose above the banks of Swale, a large portion of it is still of such strength that there seems no reason why it should not endure for some centuries longer. It is scarcely believable, indeed, that the massive keep, a prominent landmark all over the surrounding district, has seen the town at its feet change and change again, or that the walls of the castle first rose immediately after the Norman Conquest. Yet it was in 1071, according to some chronicles, in 1087 according to others, that the building of Richmond Castle began. Previous to the coming of the Normans all the land hereabouts belonged to Edwin, the Saxon earl, who was dispossessed of them by the Conqueror in 1069. Grainge quotes the deed by which William bestowed them upon his nephew Alan Rufus, son of Eudo, Earl of Bretagne, and one of the principal Norman leaders at the fight of Senlac. "I, William, surnamed the Bastard," it runs, "do give and grant to thee Alan, my nephew, Earl of Bretagne, and to thy heirs for ever, all the town and lands which lately belonged to Earl Edwyn in Yorkshire; with the knights' fees, churches, and other privileges and customs, in as free and honourable a manner as the said Edwyn held them." The full meaning of this laconic document is only understood when the term "towns and lands" is explained. The Conqueror's gift to his nephew consisted of 440 manors, 104 parishes, and 140 knights' fees, each of which contained 12 ploughlands, or 640 acres—a reward for services rendered which only a king having a whole kingdom at his mercy and disposal could afford to bestow.

According to the best authorities Alan Rufus only built a small part of the castle of Richmond, but considerable additions were speedily made to his original structure by his immediate successors, Alan Niger and Stephen Fergant, who between them built a wall of great strength, 800 yards in length, with flanking towers and embattlements. In 1146 Conan, fourth Earl of Richmond, built the keep, placing it on the north side of the castle as being the weakest from a defensive point of view, the south, east, and west sides being absolutely impregnable from the character of the situation. Even then further fortification of the castle was effected by the erection of a barbican which shielded the gate and the drawbridge. Nothing stronger than this castle in the way of a fortified building could have been fashioned in those days, yet it is singular that it figures little in



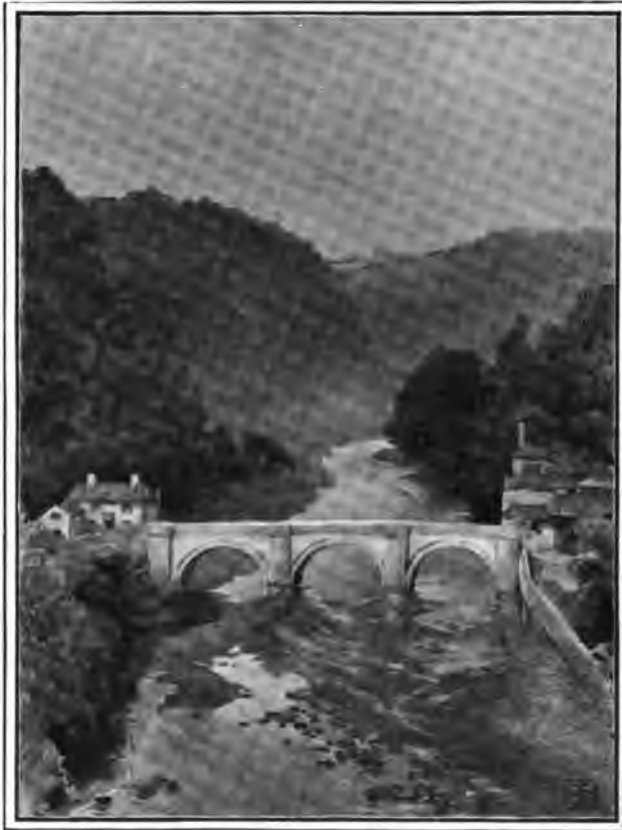
RICHMOND FROM THE WEST

history, that no war or battle of any importance was ever waged around its walls, and that it was never besieged. It is singular, too, that in spite of its great strength it was never made the centre of any of the military operations carried out so frequently in the north, and that the Royalists did not make a determined stand for the crown within its walls. Its history, so far as important events are concerned, is slight. It had a royal captive in 1174 in the person of William the Lion, King of Scotland, who, being taken prisoner at Alnwick by Randolph de Glanville, was brought here and confined in a small dungeon until he took the oath of allegiance to Henry II. With the lands, manors, churches, and other desirable possessions which accompanied it, it changed hands several times, the Crown alternately dispossessing some holder of the earldom and bestowing it upon a more deserving or convenient recipient of royal favours. Held by the Earls of Bretagne from 1069 until the death of Conan, the fourth earl, it was afterwards enjoyed at various times by such famous men as John of Gaunt and Ralph Neville, and by unknown folk like Henry Fitzroy, a bastard son of Henry VIII. Finally, in 1674, Charles Lennox, the natural son of Charles II., was created Duke of Richmond by his royal father, and the earldom has since been merged in the duchy. With the increased honour, however, the broad acres of Richmondshire did not go—all that the merry monarch gave his son with the title was the land enclosed by the castle walls.

The keep, which Grange rightly designates the most majestic tower in Yorkshire, is nearly 100 feet in height, and its walls are 11 feet in thickness. It is flanked at the sides by flat buttresses in the Norman style, which are continued at the angles and form square turrets. It is divided into several stories by plain string-courses, the lower one being now used as a guard-room by the local volunteers, and some of the higher ones as receptacles for military stores. From the extreme summit of the tower there is a magnificent view of Swaledale and of the surrounding country, and on a clear day it is possible to see the three towers of York Minster rising forty miles away beyond the lower stretches of the Swale. One of the most interesting features of the keep is the octagonal column in the centre of the lower storey, from the capital of which spring the circular arches which support the groined roof. A smaller tower, yet an impressive one, to the left of the keep, is known as Robin Hood's Tower, and is supposed to have been the station of the Lords of Middleham. Its ground floor contains a small chapel, dedicated to St. Nicholas, in which there are some interesting architectural features. Another tower, somewhat oddly named the Gold Hole, in which it is said treasure was stored in bygone days, contains in its lowest storey an archway which is supposed to be the entrance to a subterranean passage leading to St. Martin's Priory, the ruins of which form an interesting object on the south bank of the Swale. But that there ever was a subterranean passage at this point is

extremely improbable, for it would not only have had to be constructed beneath the bed of the river, but have necessitated a descent of at least a hundred feet on the castle side, and an ascent of some eighty feet on the opposite bank. There is a much more interesting matter in the south-east corner of the castle yard in the very fine building known as the Hall of Scolland, which is said to have been built by Scolland, Lord of Bedale, a feudatory of the Earls of Richmond. It forms a spacious and nobly-built apartment, over 70 feet in length and nearly 30 in breadth, and appears to have been used as the banqueting-hall of the castle. Its architecture is of the Early Norman style, and is much more ornate in character than that of any other portion of the stronghold. There is little else in the castle of particular note, but outside its walls on the side overhanging the river there is a terrace, of modern construction, and much used by the townsfolk as a promenade, from which an excellent notion of its impregnability from all attack on the south, west, and east sides may be gained. The walls, largely fashioned from the rock on which the castle is built, rise sheer and strong from the terrace, beneath which the ground falls precipitously to the river lying far below. From this terrace, too, there are delightful and charming prospects of the Swale as it winds westward to the beginnings of Swaledale proper, and of the old bridge at the foot of the hill, near which are clustered some of the quaintest and most picturesque old houses and buildings of the town.

Although Richmond Castle makes so small a figure in history, it is not without some association with historical personages, and there attaches to it at least one legend of romantic interest.



THE OLD BRIDGE AT RICHMOND

It was at one time the residence of the unhappy Constance of Brittany, who within a year of the death of her first husband, Geoffrey Plantagenet, was given in marriage to Ranulph, Earl of Chester, by order of John Lackland, the virtual murderer of her son, Arthur. It was also the scene of certain bickerings and dissensions between John and the folk of the town and neighbourhood—the latter appearing to have much resented and resisted the landless monarch's methods of ruling his subjects. As to its legend it shares that with various other castles. It is said that somewhere deep down in the vaults hewn out of the solid rock on which the castle stands, Arthur the King and his Knights of the Round Table lie locked in sleep, a sleep that is to endure until a day comes when England shall find herself in great extremity. Then they are to awake, and, shaking off their slumber, rise and go forth to do even greater deeds than those with which history and legend has credited them. There is, however, a curious incongruity about this legend which does not appear to have evoked any comment from its many narrators. It is said that the sleepers will not wake until England is in such extremity as to need their help—but it is also said that in the vault or chamber where they lie wrapped in magic slumber there hangs an enchanted sword and an enchanted horn, and that if any man penetrating thither shall draw sword or blow horn the sleepers will wake. There seems to be here a mixture of two legends—the first, that common to several other castles wherein Arthur and his Knights are said to lie sleeping until England needs their services; the second, one peculiar to Richmond. This second legend, which has been narrated frequently, runs as follows:—There lived in the town of Richmond at one time (the legend is here, like most other legends of its sort, delightfully vague) a person named Thomson, who followed the trade of a potter. Upon a day, Thomson, prowling around the purlieus of the castle, came upon an underground passage and took heart of grace enough to explore it, very probably fancying that he might find treasure or something worth having. Being led by this passage into the bowels of the great rock on which the castle stands, Thomson found himself eventually in a large cave, and there saw the great King and his Knights locked in enchanted sleep. Also he saw the horn and the sword, and laid hands on the latter, meaning to draw the blade from its sheath. But as he drew it there arose a stir amongst the sleepers, the stir and murmur of strong men waking from dreamless slumbers, and Thomson, scared, doubtless, out of his wits, let the sword slip back into the scabbard and fled by the way he had come. It is said that as he turned to flee he heard a voice cry—

“Potter, Potter Thomson!  
If thou had'st either drawn  
The sword, or blown the horn,  
Thou had'st been the luckiest man  
Ever yet was born!”

There are certain obvious inconsequences and incongruities about this story which do not detract from its pleasantness. As is usual in the case of such legends its early narrators appear to have thought it unnecessary to explain why Thomson, thus cheered and encouraged, did not turn back, draw sword, blow horn, and march boldly into Richmond at the head of Arthur and the Knights of the Round Table. But modern tellers of the story, fearing inevitable consequences, have rounded it off by asserting that Thomson, having once gained the light of day, and ruminated on the meaning of the rhymes addressed to him, gathered new courage and turned back, resolved to blow such a blast upon the horn as would waken the dead. Unfortunately, he was unable to discover the underground passage—it had certainly been there but a moment before, yet now it was gone, vanished, and, as events proved, utterly lost to him for ever. And if the story may be still further added to, one may pardonably presume that Master Thomson spent the remainder of his days in the most comfortable corner of his favourite house of call, telling to all and sundry the remarkable history of his adventure. It seems very reasonable to suppose that he did so, for there are folk in Richmond at this day who believe firmly that beneath their great castle lie Arthur and his Knights waiting for somebody more prompt to seize an immediate opportunity than was Potter Thomson of uncertain fame.

## III

Ancient as is the fine old castle of Richmond, it is not so ancient as the town over which its great keep holds guard. There is some presumption that Richmond was a Roman settlement, if not a station, a large number of coins of the later Emperors having been found at the foot of the castle hill early in the last century. According to some writers, it derived its present name from Alan Rufus, its first Norman possessor, who called it *Riche-mont* after a castle of that name in Brittany, but it seems much more probable that the true derivation is from the Angle *Ricesmund*, the hill of rule, or government. That there was much of a town here, however, before the Norman Conquest, is improbable—Richmond, as in the case of most towns similarly situated, appears to have grown up around its castle. It was probably walled in at an early stage of its career, and the area thus enclosed does not seem to have been of any great extent. According to Leland, the walls and gates had been destroyed by his time, for he remarks that “Richemonte towne is waulled, and the castle on the riverside of Swale is as the knot of the cumpace of the waul; in the waul be three gates, Frenchgate on the north part of the town, Finkelstreetgate, Bargate, all these be down, but vestiges still remain.” It is somewhat difficult, however, to understand Leland’s exact meaning here. Until the beginning of the

fourteenth century Richmond town was fortified by a stockade, built, most likely after the Celtic fashion—earthworks surmounted by strong palisading—and the wall was built in 1312, enclosing an area practically represented by the present market-place. There were, as he says, three bars—one in Finkle Street, one in Frenchgate, and one at the head of Cornforth Hill, on the west side of the castle, overlooking the bridge and the river. The last is still in existence, and in a fair state of preservation, as is also a postern gate in Friar's Wynd, on the north side of the market-place; those in Finkle Street and Frenchgate were not taken down until 1773. What the Richmond of mediæval times was like, then, may be somewhat determined from the existence and position of the castle and walls. It appears to have been one of the smaller walled towns, and it is not probable that there were many buildings without the latter until comparatively modern times, the bulk of the place being within the enclosed fortified area on the north side of the castle, and on the site of the present market-place. Unlike several of the ancient Yorkshire towns, it had no very early Parliamentary representation. It was first incorporated in the nineteenth year of Elizabeth's reign, and was eight years later enfranchised, the right of election being vested in the ancient burgage owners. It seems to have had a considerable trade in cattle and in the manufacture of yarn stockings, which were made here in great quantities at one time, and largely bought by the husbandmen of the district, but there were complaints at the beginning of the present century as to the scarcity of coal, which was hard to secure in adequate supplies, the Swale being unnavigable. That general trade was carried on here to some extent and advantage, however, is evidenced by the fact that the town had thirteen free companies of tradesmen whose privilege it was to elect the mayor of the borough on the Feast of St. Hilary.

There are few towns in Yorkshire, or indeed in England, which possess a market-place one half as interesting or as picturesque as that of Richmond. It is an open space of considerable area, paved with cobble stones, and rising somewhat abruptly from its eastern boundary to the west, where it widens out into a broad plateau. In its centre stands Trinity Church—surely the most curious of ecclesiastical edifices, since it is inextricably mixed up with shops and houses. The stranger may be excused much doubt and wonder when he finds himself regarding a church, the north aisle of which seems to be full of shops, the south of dwelling-houses, and between whose nave and tower a house has somehow contrived to squeeze itself. All these strange things, however, are to be seen in the market-place of Richmond. Originally a Norman structure, Trinity Church has undergone many curious architectural adversities and changes. Leland remarks of the first building that it contained some curious figures which the townsfolk took to be idols, but there is now not a trace of it left. When the south aisle, which ran parallel with the north



THE MARKET-PLACE, RICHMOND

wall of the castle, was demolished, there are no local records to prove, but before the end of the fifteenth century houses had been built on its site, and it may have been about the same time that the north aisle was converted into shops, and that the house which stands sandwiched between nave and tower was somehow brought into existence. The entire block of buildings, tower, church, shops, and houses, forms a unique and grotesque pile of architecture, and is more interesting in this respect than the stately parish church. In the tower of Trinity Church the curfew bell is tolled every night at eight o'clock, and it seems very probable that the custom has been kept up since its first institution by the Norman Conqueror. Near the church and its incongruous shops stands a fine old-market cross, all around which rise houses of more or less old-world appearance, dominated by the great keep of the castle, which dwarfs all else and seems to keep silent watch over the town. Here, as in all the old market-boroughs, there are numerous quaint-looking old inns wherein on market-days the men of the moors and dales congregate to talk of prices, and to indulge in humour which is somewhat lost on strangers who do not understand the dialect of the neighbourhood. In the larger inns of the place, however, modernity has firmly established itself, probably because so many travellers and tourists find Richmond a most convenient centre for the district.

Opposite the tower of Trinity Church, on the north side of the market-place, there is a curious, narrow little street or passage-way called Friar's Wynd, wherein the traveller will find an almost perfect example of a postern



gate. Passing through this old relic of the days when Richmond was a walled town the eye rests on the beautiful and stately tower of the old Franciscan house of Grey Friars—an example of the most graceful style of Gothic architecture, rarely to be met with in the north country. With the exception of a small part of the south aisle, it is all that remains of the monastery which stood here, and Grainge conjectures that it was more probably the beginning of a new church than the sole relic of an old one. The arches at the base of the tower are singularly beautiful, and the whole fabric, in its height, proportions, and the richness of its design, is the greatest ornament of the picturesque part of Richmond in which it stands. The Franciscan house here is supposed to have been founded by Ralph, Lord of Middleham, in 1258. In common with all houses of its order, it had no endowment and no property, and its members existed on the charity of the faithful. It seems to have flourished with some degree of prosperity until the Dissolution of the Religious Houses, and then its members, by reason of their contumacy, entered upon a period of much grief and trouble to themselves. Burnet records that of all the religious houses hereabouts, none made so much to do in respect to taking the oath of supremacy as that of the Franciscan Friars at Richmond, several members of which refused to conform to Henry VIII.'s order, and swore to follow the rule of St. Francis whatever came. As a consequence several of them suffered death rather than break their vows, and others died in prison.

The parish church of Richmond, which stands on a hillside overlooking the Swale as it flows towards Easby, appears to have been built without the walls, when the church in the market-place became too small for the increasing population. The Norman columns on the south side of the nave appear to date from the twelfth century, and the greater part of the edifice from the thirteenth, but the entire fabric was rebuilt during the reign of Henry III., and thoroughly restored about forty years ago, the style of the old church being preserved as far as possible. On the tower, built in 1390, are the arms of the families of Scrope, Aske, and Neville, to whose generosity its erection was doubtless largely due. The exterior of the church, which consists of nave, north and south aisles, chancel, south chapel, sacristy, north and south porches, and tower at the west end, is very imposing, and the situation of the fabric makes it a notable object as Richmond is approached from the east. Within the church there are numerous matters of interest. Perhaps the most interesting are the stalls, now reserved for the mayor and corporation of Richmond, which originally belonged to Easby Abbey, and were removed from the choir there at the Dissolution. They are beautifully carved and ornamented, and one of them, appropriated to the mayor, appears to have been the choir-stall of Bampton, one of the last Abbots of St. Agatha's, from the circumstance that the shield above it is decorated with his rebus, a crozier fixed in a tun bearing the letters *Ba*, and surrounded by a label inscribed *Abbot*.



*W. H. road from the East*

gates, passing through the old relic of the days when Richmond was still a town the eye rests on the beautiful and stately tower of the Franciscan house of Grey Friars—an example of the most graceful style of Gothic architecture, rarely to be met with in the north country. With the exception of a small part of the south aisle, it is all that remains of the monastery which stood here, and Grange conjectures that it was more probably the beginning of a new church than the sole relic of an old one. The arches at the base of the tower are singularly beautiful, and the whole fabric, in its height, proportions, and the richness of its design, is the greatest ornament of the picture of a part of Richmond in which it stands. The Franciscan house here is supposed to have been founded by Ralph, Lord of Airedale, in 1258. In common with all houses of its order, it had no revenues, and no property, and its members existed on the charity of the faithful. It seems to have flourished with some degree of prosperity until the dissolution of the Religious Houses, and then its members, by reason of their contumacy, entered upon a period of much grief and trouble to themselves. Herbert tells us that of all the religious houses hereabouts, none made so much ado in respect to taking the oath of supremacy as that of the Franciscan Friars at Richmond, several members of which refused to conform to Henry VIII's order, and swore to follow the rule of St. Francis if that came. As a consequence several of them suffered death rather than break their vows, and others died in prison.

The parish church of Richmond, which stands on a hillside overlooking the river as it flows towards Easby, appears to have been built without any view, when the church in the market-place became too small for the increasing population. The Norman columns on the south side of the nave appear to date from the twelfth century, and the greater part of the edifice is of the thirteenth, but the entire fabric was rebuilt during the reign of Elizabeth, and thoroughly restored about forty years ago, the style of the architecture being preserved as far as possible. On the tower, built in 1529, are the arms of the families of Scrope, Aske, and Neville, to whose benefactions its construction was doubtless largely due. The exterior of the church, which consists of nave, north and south aisles, chancel, south chapel, and two north and south porches, and tower at the west end, is very imposing, and the situation of the fabric makes it a notable object as Richmond is approached from the east. Within the church there are numerous objects of interest. Perhaps the most interesting are the stalls, now reserved for the mayor and corporation of Richmond, which originally belonged to St. Agatha's by Abbey, and were removed from the choir there at the dissolution. They are beautifully carved and ornamented, and one appropriated to the mayor, appears to have been the choir-stall of the last Abbot, one of the last Abbots of St. Agatha's, from the circumstance that the shield above it is decorated with his rebus, a crozier fixed in a tan bearing the letters *Ba*, and surrounded by a label inscribed *Abbot*.



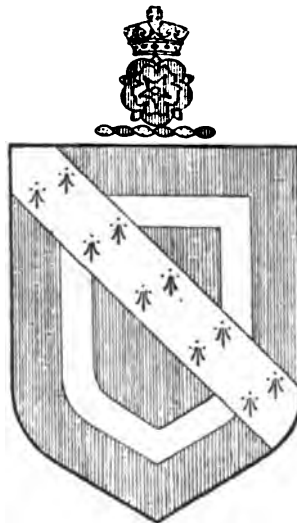
*Richmond from the East.*



There is a curious inscription on a filleting above the stalls, in which is set forth in Latin a list of the ten abuses of the cloister which good religious were admonished to avoid. Of the monuments of the church, the most noteworthy is that in memory of Sir Timothy Hutton of Marske, and of his wife and children, the names of the knight and his lady being expressed, after the fashion of the seventeenth century, in cryptic fashion. There was here previous to the Civil War some very fine stained glass, some of which displayed the arms and escutcheons of notable families of the neighbourhood, but little of it survived the misguided zeal of the Puritan faction. In the registers of the church there are some exceedingly quaint and curious entries. One, dated September 9th, 1558 records that Richard Snell was burned on that day in Newbiggin, opposite the gaol. Various entries show that between August 17th, 1597, and December 15th, 1598, no less than 1050 people died of the plague within the parish of Richmond. An entry of the 18th May 1626 records that Sir Timothy Hutton caused to be baptized the bastard daughter of Robert Sewell and Isabel Hutchison, and states the child's birth to have taken place in Earle Orchard. In 1708 was buried Alice Bagarley, virgin, aged ninety-three years, and in 1798 the register records the obsequies of one Goodburne, a grocer, who weighed twenty-seven stones.

If it were not for the dominating presence of the castle and of the beautiful tower of Grey Friars, the Richmond of to-day would wear more of the aspect of a modern town than of a mediæval one, but there are several relics and landmarks of antiquity, besides the remains of the great fortress and the Franciscan monastery, which are interesting. Across the river from the castle are the ruins of the Priory of St. Martin, one of the smaller Benedictine houses, which was founded by one of the Lords of Aske about the end of the twelfth century. When it was surrendered to the Royal Commissioners in 1535 it housed a prior and nine monks, and seems to have been of little importance. There is little left of the buildings save the entrance-gate and porter's lodge, but these fragments make an effective picture seen from the terrace beneath the castle wall. Even less is left of another religious foundation, the Hospital of St. Nicholas, the ruins of which are incorporated with the walls of a modern dwelling-house on the Catterick road. This place appears to have been founded as early as the eleventh century, probably by one of the first Norman earls, and there is record of its restoration about the middle of the fifteenth century by William Ascough, of Bedale, Justice of the Court of Common Pleas, who established within it a chantry chapel with one priest. Its value at the Dissolution was only £13, 12s. a year, and of this £3 was paid to the chantry priest, and 12s. to a person described as the Anchoress of Richmond, of whom little appears to be known. On the site of this house there was discovered in 1841 a stone coffin which contained human remains and a small chalice, and was probably that of one of the

chaplains. Of the other religious houses of Richmond small trace is left. There was formerly a chapel of St. Edmund on Anchorage Hill, some part of which appears in the hospital or almshouse now standing on the same site, and another of St. Anthony at Pinfold Green, and one of St. James in Bargate. Of the ancient walls nothing remains but the postern in Friar's Wynd and the gate on Cornforth Hill. Yet, although so many landmarks of ancient Richmond have disappeared, its possession of the great castle overlooking the Swale and of the tower of Grey Friars and the quaint church in the market-place combine to make it redolent of antiquity, while its natural advantages of position place it beyond all dispute as the most romantically situated town in the county.



THE ARMS OF RICHMOND



ALFRED WATSON'S  
1892

THE SWALE AT RICHMOND



## CHAPTER XLVII

### Swaledale

NORTHERN OUTSKIRTS OF RICHMOND—SKEEBY—SCOTCH CORNER—SEDBURY PARK—GILLING—RAVENSWORTH CASTLE—KIRKBY RAVENSWORTH—ASKE HALL—WHITCLIFFE WOODS—HUDSWELL—MARSKE—ELLERTON ABBEY—MARRICK—MARRICK PRIORY—GRINTON—THE ANCIENT FAMILY OF SWALE—FREMINGTON—ARKLE BECK—REETH—THE HILLS AND MOORS—MUKER—BUTTER TUBS PASS—THE MINISTER OF KELD—SOURCES OF THE SWALE—WILDNESS AND GRANDEUR OF THE BORDER COUNTRY.

#### I

**N**ORTHWARD of the town of Richmond and lying on the verge of the watershed which divides the valley of the Swale from that of the Tees, there is a stretch of country to which the traveller should turn aside ere he prosecutes his journey westward into Swaledale proper. It can scarcely be said to be a part of Swaledale, yet it is closely connected with it by a tributary of that river which, first under the name of Gilling Beck and secondly under that of Skeeby Beck, intersects an undulating tract of land from a point north-west of Ravensworth Castle to one situate between Easby Abbey and Brompton-upon-Swale. A convenient and pleasant fashion of exploring this district may be found by following the road from Richmond through Skeeby to Scotch Corner, thence turning to the north-east along the old Roman road which ran between Greta Bridge and Leeming Lane, until Dunsa Bank is reached, and a southward route taken back to Richmond by way of Ravensworth, Gilling, and Aske Hall. Such a route introduces the traveller to some of the most delightful scenery in this part of the North Riding, and leads him through various places of some historic importance. Almost at the outset of his journey he is rewarded with a fine view of Richmond itself, seen from the highroad to the north-east of the town, and from that point showing itself much beneath him. Here the promontory-like character of the hill on which Richmond is principally

built is realised more than in any other obtainable view—the town appears to jut out above the north bank of the Swale almost as abruptly as Flamborough Head from the east coast. Here, too, the Swale winding round the sharply-outlined edge of the great plateau topped by the castle, is seen as it rushes over the falls beneath the ruins of St. Martin's Priory, and disappears behind the wooded bank which shelters the riverside path between Easby and Richmond. This, though not the finest view of the town and castle, is an impressive and interesting one, especially when seen early in the morning as the blue smoke curls above the gables and towers and forms a misty curtain which only half hides the purple stretches of the fells and moors of Upper Swaledale.

There is little of interest in Skeeby, a lonely little farming village, overlooking the valley in which the beck to which it gives a name runs southward to the Swale, but on its western outskirts the traveller by turning somewhat out of his way may see in a meadow known as the Whitefield an embankment of considerable magnitude, which is part of the famous earthwork that ran from Barforth on the Tees to a point south of Easby on the Swale, and was called the Scot's Dyke. It ran almost parallel with the Roman road from the south, which having crossed the Swale at Catterick Bridge divides itself at Scotch Corner into two branches, one leading away to the north-west to Greta Bridge, Bowes, Westmorland, and Carlisle, the other proceeding due north to Durham and Northumberland. Scotch Corner, situate on the ridge of the high ground which tops the north bank of Skeeby Beck, is interesting for more than one reason. The ancient inn which stands in the angle of the two great roads has a lonely and almost desolate appearance, which is heightened by the knowledge of the traveller that it must at one time have been a busy and flourishing hostelry in the days when these roads were thronged with traffic, and when droves of Scotch cattle were continually traversing the highway southward. It is a quaint and picturesque house, and is still entitled to call itself a roadside inn of some note, for though it stands in such a lonely situation, the visitors' book inside its parlour shows that it is visited with great frequency by that modern successor of the traveller of old days—the cyclist. It is at such spots as these, however, that the loneliness of the old highways is most felt. Seventy years ago it would have been impossible to visit a roadside inn like that at Scotch Corner without finding numerous sights and sounds of bustle and hurry—horses being removed from one coach, a new relay being harnessed to another, a couple of runaway lovers clamouring for fresh horses for their journey northward to Gretna Green, horsemen, coachmen, grooms, post-boys, crowded about the door of the inn, travellers refreshing themselves inside, and everything betokening the highway life which the introduction of steam banished for ever. Nowadays there is nothing of this to be seen—a waggon lumbers along, a cyclist dashes up, dismounts for a few moments,

and is on his way again, a tramp, down at heel, and out at elbow, cocks a longing eye at the sign and shambles nearer to the next casual ward, and the road, once full of life and bustle, is deserted. Little wonder that if the landlord of wayside inns like this be an ancient man, he should shake his head sadly when he thinks of what piping times he and his fellows knew ere the coaches were driven off the road.

The stretch of highway between Scotch Corner and Dunsa Bank runs at first along the northern boundary of Sedbury Park—the “pretty place callid Sedbyre, having a pretty parke, and a little lake in it,” whereat, says Leland, Sir Henry Gascoigne dwelt when he came into these parts. Sedbury was for a long period the seat of the Boynton family, the last of whom, Sir Henry Boynton, appears to have died in 1531, judging from an inscription in the chantry chapel of the Boyntons at Gilling. There is record that in 1463, Joan, widow of Christopher Boynton and daughter of Lord Scrope of Bolton Castle, obtained permission for the celebration of mass in the private chapel of Sedbury. Hereabouts the land is richly wooded, and there is much fir, pine, and larch in the woods of Sedbury and on the roadside. Where the highway intersects the road from Richmond to Piercebridge on the Tees there is a fine view of the village of Gilling, lying in the valley below, with the woods of Aske rising above it to the southward. Northward of the road and on the summit of the watershed of the Tees are long stretches of country, once presumably moorland and unproductive, since they are known as Gatherley Moor, Caskin Moor, and so forth, but which now appear to be under a good state of cultivation. The most charming aspects of the stretch of highroad between Scotch Corner and Dunsa Bank, however, are undoubtedly the magnificent prospects of moor and fell scenery which open out to the west beyond Ravensworth and Dalton—long, wide, sweeping stretches of soft grey and purple colour, which, seen under an autumn sun, are a delight to behold.

Unlike the great Roman highway of which it is an offshoot, the road from Scotch Corner to the north-west of England is of such an undulatory character as to deserve at times the title of hilly, and at Dunsa Bank and again at Brewson Bank, a little further on, it rises in long, trying slopes. From Dunsa Bank a road turns sharply south into the wide, fertile valley above which rises the church of Kirkby Ravensworth, a prominent object in the wide-spreading landscape. Before it is reached, however, the ruins of Ravensworth Castle are seen on the hillside. There is little of them left now, but they have a history full of interest. There was a stronghold here in Saxon times, some part of which, it is thought, may be traced in the present ruins. After the Norman Conquest the castle was for a time in possession of Bardolph, who is said to have become a monk of St. Mary's Abbey at York in his old age, and it was at later periods held by the families of Fitz-Hugh, and of Parr, and of Wharton. Leland says that



GILLING VILLAGE

he found nothing remarkable about it, but mentions that when he saw it there were two or three towers still standing. The most notable part of the present ruins is a small tower on which appears the following inscription, each word of which is carved on a separate stone:—

xp't. dn's. ih'c. b'ia. fons & origo. alpha & oo.

The church of Kirkby Ravensworth is situate at some distance from the castle and the village—a charmingly situated place which excited Leland's admiration three centuries ago—and contains some quaint and curious architecture of the fourteenth century. Cooke records that in this parish an ancient gold ring was discovered, bearing the inscription in old English letters, *Ʒc*, *Ʒc*, *Ʒc*. In the neighbouring hamlet of Dalton and within sight of the road leading from Scotch Corner to Greta Bridge there are some remains of a Roman summer camp wherein several objects of interest have been unearthed at various times, amongst them being a square stone coffin which is said to have contained treasure.

The stretch of valley between Ravensworth and Gilling makes up in pastoral prettiness for what it lacks in boldness. It is somewhat reminiscent of the pastoral valleys of the middle part of the county and abounds in rich meadow lands, thick coppices, and tall hedgerows. The beck from which the last-named village takes its name runs through its midst, closed

in on the south by the slopes rising towards Aske, and on the north by the tree-crowned glades of Hartforth Park. Gilling itself, lying at the foot of the steep hill up which the highroad climbs at a sharp angle to the northwards, is one of the most interesting and picturesque villages in the district. The beck runs under a stone bridge through its midst, and winds down the valley towards Skeeby between broad meadows well stocked with sheep and cattle. Half-way down the long, slightly-curved village street stands the church, dedicated to St. Agatha, and surrounded by trees which almost hide it and its parsonage from the gaze of passers-by. It contains numerous traces of Norman work, and though restored about fifty years ago its architecture is quaint and interesting. A bright and cheery-looking place when seen on a sunny day, Gilling has nothing in its appearance to suggest to the traveller that it was the scene of a king's murder. Yet if tradition be true it was here that one of the ancient Kings of Deira, having been basely betrayed to his enemy, the King of the Bernicians, was foully murdered. Here, too, according to the same tradition the murderer, following the pious custom of those days, caused a monastery to be built, and endowed it for the health of his own and his victim's soul. It is supposed that Gilling was the royal seat or town of the Angle kings, and that their castle, together with the monastery, was destroyed by the Danes towards the end of the ninth century. But of all these matters the Gilling of to-day says nothing; it is as quiet and peaceful a village, nestling snugly amidst the surrounding slopes, as all the north country can show. High above it, on the hillside that slopes upward from the highroad leading to Richmond, stands Aske Hall, the seat of the Marquis of Zetland, a mansion of great size and beauty, standing amidst thick woods and fronted by a long wide stretch of verdurous park. Held prior to the Norman Conquest by Tor, the Saxon, Aske was afterwards given to Wyomer, kinsman of Alan Rufus, first Earl of Richmond, whose descendants not only held it and its broad acres for over five hundred years, but took a new name from it. When the last male of the Askes died the estate passed by the female line to the family of Bowes, and was subsequently owned by the Whartons, the D'Arcys—who set about building the present house in close proximity to the ancient stronghold of the Askes—and the Dundases, whose present head is the Marquis of Zetland (*cr.* Baron Dundas 1794, Earl of Zetland 1838, and Marquis of Zetland, 1892). From one branch of the Aske family sprang the ill-fated Robert Aske, the leader and instigator of the Pilgrimage of Grace, who after making himself master of Pontefract, Hull, and York was captured by the Royalist forces, and hung in chains at Clifford's Tower in the latter city in 1537. Although surpassed in size and magnificence and in the value of its historical associations by more than one of the great Yorkshire houses, Aske Hall possesses a proud pre-eminence above all of them in the beauty and charm of its situation and surroundings, and in the picturesqueness of its aspect from whatever point it is viewed.



ASKE HALL

## II

Although the valley of the Swale begins to be really picturesque at Catterick Bridge it is usually held that Swaledale itself does not begin until Richmond is passed. West of Richmond the valley certainly assumes a new and wild aspect. From the outskirts of the town a long declivity leads to Lownthwaite Bridge, where the traveller may well pause for awhile in order to enjoy the beauties of the surrounding scenery. Behind him towers the great keep of Richmond Castle and the roofs and gables of the town; at his feet the Swale, flowing eastward in a long, sweeping curve, murmurs and frets over great beds of pebble and shingle; on his right the woods and rocks of Whitcliffe rise at the head of the north bank of the river; on his left the south bank, more precipitous than the north, rises from the most pastoral of meadows to a considerable height thickly covered with wood. Perched high on the left bank is the little village of Hudswell, from whence there is a remarkable view of the surrounding district, and whose one street contains the most curious collection of half-ruinous, tumble-down houses one could desire to see. There are some interesting remains of ancient architecture in the church here, which is a modern structure erected in place of the old thirteenth century church that formerly stood on the same site. On the opposite side of the valley, on Whitcliffe Scar, two stones mark the fearful leap taken by a horse down the face of the rocks in 1696. The horse itself was killed, but its rider, one Willance, escaped, and in memory of his truly miraculous preservation presented

the corporation of Richmond with a silver cup which is still in their possession.

All the way from Lownthwaite Bridge to that of Downholme the Swale winds along through scenery which increases in wildness and grandeur at every turn of the road which runs in close proximity to it along its south bank. Its murmur never ceases, and at certain times of the year increases to loud complainings as its swollen flood passes over the great limestone rocks which form its bed. Groves of fir and pine rise out of its steep overhanging banks, but there is little sign of human life—a stray farmstead or lonely cottage, or the presence of a dalesman on some precipitous height above the valley, alone showing that men inhabit its loneliness. Standing on Downholme Bridge the traveller will see nothing to tell him that he is in close proximity to a village; yet a little way to the northward sits Marske, in a pleasant hollow surrounded by woods and glens. It is apparently so out of the way, so hidden from the highroad along Swaledale, that one may reasonably wonder a traveller should ever find it; nevertheless, it was known to Leland, who says that when he saw it one "Mr. Cunners" (Conyers) had a "fine place" here. The "fine place" still exists in Marske Hall, the seat of the family of Hutton. Here are preserved certain family relics of great interest, one of them a silver cup said to have been presented by Queen Elizabeth to Dr. Matthew Hutton, Archbishop of Canterbury, who was born here and enjoyed a brilliant ecclesiastical career, though how that can be is a matter of wonder seeing that the prelate was born in 1692, and that the queen died in 1603. A feature of the surroundings of Marske Hall is an obelisk of considerable height, raised upon an eminence in the grounds in the early part of the present century, in memory of Captain Matthew Hutton. There is an interesting Norman doorway in the church here, and the village is quaint and picturesque.

Beyond Downholme Bridge, Swaledale increases in wildness and in the steepness of its sides, and the river winds and turns in sharper fashion than before. A mile to the east of Ellerton the road which runs at its side describes a peculiarly sudden curve through the woods surrounding one of the numerous becks which hereabouts pay tribute to the river, and at this point the wild hill scenery at the head of the dale comes somewhat into view, with Ellerton Abbey lying in the immediate foreground on the south bank of the Swale. There is little of this ancient house now left, but its ruined tower forms a prominent feature in the landscape. Above it on either side of the river the fells rise to a considerable height; around it stretch green meadows; close to its walls the Swale murmurs in its pebbly and rock-strewn bed. Founded in the reign of Henry II. by Wyomer, Lord of Aske, this ancient nunnery of the Cistercian rule must at all times have been one of the quietest and most retired of mediæval religious houses, though that it knew trouble and sorrow is proved from the fact that it was pillaged by the Scots during one of their maraudings. It does not



THE SWALE, NEAR ELLERTON ABBEY

appear to have been a house of any magnitude: the ruins still in existence would seem to show that it was always a small foundation, and at the time of the Dissolution its yearly revenues only amounted to the sum of £15. A little further along the Swale, but on the opposite bank, are the ruins of another nunnery, the Benedictine Priory of Marrick, which was founded by another Lord of Aske, Roger, some years previous to the foundation of Ellerton, and which seems to have been a somewhat prosperous institution, seeing that it accommodated seventeen nuns at the Dissolution, and had then a revenue of nearly £65 per annum. Here, if the traveller should chance to visit it on an autumn day, when twilight is gathering over the wildness of the surrounding fells, he will set eyes on a scene which can scarcely be equalled in its power of raising feelings of sadness and desolation. Much of the fabric of the ancient priory church has been pulled down and used in the construction of a parish church, which, however, is antique enough in appearance to form part of the ruins. These ruins are so grey, so time-worn, so utterly forlorn and desolate in appearance, that not even the most hardened traveller can fail to be moved by them. The little churchyard in their midst, untidy, miserably neglected, contains a few ancient tombstones, half lost to sight in the clinging grass which rises to the height of a man's knee, and there is a sense of silence hanging over it which adds further desolation to the scene. Between the ruins and the river stands a typical Swaledale farmstead—a stoutly-built house of grey stone with low-ceilinged rooms; high above ruins and farmstead on the fell-side hangs the village of Marrick, a place so far away from the highroad, so inaccessible to strangers and to any form of vehicle, that its folk regard the intrusion of either as a thing of wonder.



From the plateau above Marrick Priory, Grinton, perhaps the most interesting place in Swaledale by reason of its situation and associations, is seen lying about the fine old bridge which there crosses the river. Its great object of interest is the ancient church of St. Andrew, standing above the Swale at the south end of the bridge, with a picturesque parsonage of the Elizabethan style in close proximity. Much of the present fabric of the church—which consists of nave, chancel, north and south aisles, and tower—dates from the thirteenth century, but the tower was rebuilt about a hundred years ago. There are some interesting remains of Norman work in the north side of the chancel, which also contains some fine old glass. One of the most notable features of the church is the screen-work, which is very quaint and graceful, and there is also here a chained copy of the New Testament. It is said that two of the six bells in the tower were brought here from Bridlington Priory—an assertion which seems to be proved by the fact that the benefice was at one time the property of that ancient foundation. There are several houses of great antiquity in and about Grinton, and one of them, Swale Hall, is particularly interesting as being the former seat of the once famous family of Swale. The story attaching to this house, now in use as a farmstead, and to the family with which it was once identified is of the most romantic and remarkable character. From the time of the Norman Conquest the Swales appear to have been persons of great importance in this part of Yorkshire. Alured de Swale, a kinsman of the Conqueror's, was Lord of Swaledale about the time that Alan Rufus was Earl of Richmond. William de Swale was slain in the Holy Wars, fighting under Richard I.; another Swale was in command of troops at Neville's Cross. A baronetcy was conferred on the family during the seventeenth century in reward for the services performed by Solomon Swale, member of Parliament for Aldborough, who on May 17, 1660, rose in his place and proposed the restoration of Charles II., which proposition resulted in the proclamation of the King next day. This Sir Solomon was succeeded in 1678 by his son, Sir Henry, who in his turn was followed by another Sir Solomon, famous as a litigant. On the 1st June 1697, there were certain depositions taken at Fremington—the village just across the river from Grinton—with relation to a cause then at issue in the Court of Pleas, between the Crown and Sir Solomon Swale, Baronet, with respect to certain lead mines in Grinton, Harkaside, and Whiteside, the names of the deponents being Ralph Binks, miner, of Stirfitt Hall, aged seventy-one years; Giles Metcalfe, of Whiteside, blacksmith, aged ninety years; Percival Close, of Grinton, carpenter, aged seventy-four years; and Nicholas Blades, of Crackpot, labourer, aged eighty years. All these witnesses agreed that the house commonly known as Swale Hall had always been known by that name, and that about fifty years previous to the date of their depositions one Solomon Swale gave the said house, with a mill and some land to Sir



GRINTON

Solomon Swale, the defendant's grandfather, for the reason that the giver had no issue, and was minded to see folk of his own name in possession of the estates. The result of the tedious Chancery suits prosecuted by this baronet was that by 1732 he had wasted the full value of the family property in law processes, and had come himself to such a low ebb that he is commonly said to have died in the Fleet Prison in 1733. Possessing nothing but an empty title, the succeeding heirs appear to have allowed even that to lie in abeyance until 1877, when it was successfully claimed by the Reverend John Swale, a monk of the Order of St. Benedict, who, as head of his family, decided to resume it, "as an honest man having regard to the future welfare of an ancient house." Even then the family romance was far from extinct. This Sir John Swale lived until 1887, when he was succeeded by another Sir John, who was at that time the landlord of an inn at Knaresborough. He died in the following year, and the title descended to one Benjamin Swale, who some little time previously had traded as an ironmonger at Knaresborough, and who only enjoyed his honours for a year. He died in 1889, and was succeeded by his brother, James Swale, a farmer at Scalaber, near Ribston, on the Nidd.

At Fremington, the pretty hamlet which lies at the bend of the road leading from Grinton to Reeth, and little more than a stone's throw from the north end of Grinton Bridge, the traveller is once more in touch with

very early times. Here there was doubtless a British camp, and here the Romans either had a station or a place of call, for numerous Roman remains, now in the museum of the Philosophical Society at York, have been discovered at various times. Here too was the settlement or clannation of the Fremings—foreigners—who lived outside the boundaries of the Angles during the time that the latter held Richmond as their central seat of power. Behind Fremington the hills and moors rise, high and wild in their contour and character, and at its western boundary runs Arkle Beck, a mountain stream which rises on the Westmorland border between Water Crag (2176 feet), and the solitudes of Stainmore Forest, and flows downwards to the Swale at this point through some of the wildest scenery in the county. North of Arkle Beck, in the steep hillsides rising towards Arkengarthdale Moor, there are numerous mines, and here and there in the savage-looking solitudes of the hills above there are isolated villages into which, in all probability, none but the dales-folk ever penetrate, so far removed are they from the valley beneath.

The little town of Reeth, built about a wide-spreading green on the plateau which lies at the foot of Calber, or Cauver Hill, arrogates to itself, with some right, the title of capital of Swaledale. It is a curious, odd-looking place, concerning which one would like to know a great many things that can never be told, but it possesses a capital inn, and is the most convenient centre in the district for folk who desire to explore the wilder parts of upper Swaledale. From Calber Hill, rising to a height of nearly 1600 feet immediately behind it, there may be had some of the most extensive views of hill and moorland scenery which it is possible to obtain in this neighbourhood. The hills, so finely placed as to be deserving of the name of mountains, rise in every direction on the north, west, and south sides—eastward the Swale winds along through the green valley past Marrick and Ellerton towards the comparatively tamer scenery about Richmond. It is impossible to say of the surrounding country that it is picturesque or charming—it is rather wild, savage, awful in its vast extent, and in its terrible solitudes. Were it not for the houses of Reeth and Grinton lying almost at the hill's base, and for the signs of human life which show themselves here and there along the valley far below, one might well imagine that all this wild land had lain desolate since the days when the early Britons honeycombed its fell-sides for lead.

From Grinton the Swale winds at the foot of a continuous succession of hills—each boldly outlined from its fellows, each of considerable height, each with a tiny village, an isolated farmstead, or a lonely cottage nestling between it and the river. Between these hills numerous torrents or becks empty themselves into the Swale, one of them, Crackpotside Beck, falling in its last moments through a lovely glen, and another, Gunnerside Gill, flowing over a rocky bed and through the romantic scenery lying between Black Hill and Melbecks Moor. As Muker is approached the scenery



on each side the river grows wilder and the hills of greater height. Kisdon (1636 feet) lies directly in front, almost obscuring further views of the valley; Black Hill (1856 feet), and Rogans Seat (2200 feet), rise abruptly to the northward; southward the land gains speedily in height until it culminates in Stag's Fell (2213 feet), and Great Shunnor Fell (2346 feet), between which lies the famous pass of Butter Tubs, by which the highway—more awful and fearsome than that which Defoe found and trembled at on Blackstone Edge—leads from Muker to Hawes. This pass derives its name from a number of curious excavations in the rocks by the roadside, which are interesting in themselves, but not one-half so worthy of the traveller's attention as are the sublime and magnificent views which may be had from their immediate neighbourhood. From this point a wonderful prospect of mountain scenery, including the groups dominated by Wherside, Great Wherside, Dod Fell, and Ingleborough, is opened out, and the whole scene is one of a peculiarly impressive nature, but so awful in its wildness and loneliness, as to be awe-inspiring and even productive of fear. Little visited by the tourist or the holiday-maker, the land in which the Swale has its sources is singularly solitary in its features and character. The traveller who does not fear loneliness, and likes to escape from the usual haunts of men, will find in the tract of country lying between Muker and the Westmorland border a solitude which will probably more than satisfy him. No better method of seeing this part of the county can

be had than by following the track over the mountains from Muker to Kirkby Stephen—a track which keeps closely to the Swale, leads at one point over an eminence nearly 2000 feet above sea-level, and everywhere affords the most sublime views. Unfortunately, it is necessary, if an accurate knowledge of the scenes hereabouts is to be gained, that one should perform this excursion not once, but a score of times. “The wide and houseless heath,” as Phillips fittingly calls this lonely land, should be crossed in all weathers in order to appreciate its grandeur. It wears one aspect on a fresh April morning; another on a hot day in August; a third when the threatenings of approaching winter begin to show themselves over the tops of the fells. Perhaps it is seen at its best, or rather in its most characteristic mood, when the mists of later autumn circle about the great hills, and heavy clouds hang over the vast expanses of moorland. In the midst of all this solitude lies Birkdale Tarn, a sheet of water which suggests the lonely pool by which Wordsworth found the Leech-gatherer, so far away does it seem from all other things of the world, and so

“bare to the eye of Heaven.”

is it, as the eye first sees it from the surrounding moorlands. Yet solitary



GUNNERSIDE GILL

as the land is, it is full of rare things of interest and beauty—the fissure called Hell Ghyll, of great depth, but so narrow that the most timid may venture to leap across it; valleys like Sleddale and Whitsundale, lonely little nooks, wherein man's foot is scarcely ever set; waterfalls like those in Stonesdale; and cataracts like that on the side of Kisdon, the hill set in the midst of the valley. But the great beauty of the final stretches of Swaledale is without doubt the solitude which hangs over its moors and fells when the last

human habitation has been passed, and the traveller is left alone with sky and earth, himself the only living thing in sight.

It is impossible in wandering about the hills and valleys of a land such as that which surrounds the sources of the Swale to avoid speculating on the character of the life which must necessarily be lived amongst them. No railway penetrates their solitudes, and unlike their sister hills and dales of the Lake District they possess no coach accommodation. How the people of their villages and farmsteads keep in touch—if keep in touch they do—with the outer world is a marvel to the stranger. It may be that these dales-folk are content to live in their apparent isolation—it may be again that they possess means of communication with the world outside of which the stranger knows nothing. But their lonely surroundings prompt the thought that the coming of a letter must be as great an event as it was in every English village seventy years ago, the arrival of a newspaper as exciting a matter as the news of Waterloo was in London when that event was already days old. It is difficult again to conceive—if one be accustomed to mixing amongst throngs and to have every moment of a day filled up with engagements for work or pleasure—how the people of these valleys and of the isolated farmsteads and cottages along the fell-sides find occupation in the resting-time which they must needs take. Beyond the performance of daily tasks there appears to be absolutely nothing to do. What the silence, and the solemnity of that silence is when night settles down over the vast solitudes and a light twinkles here and there amongst the hills, telling of the presence of lonely cots with their lonelier folk, cannot be described—but it can be felt, and felt with a keenness that almost amounts to pain.

But after all it is not so much with men as with the earth which is here so sparsely inhabited by men that the traveller is here concerned. From Muker going westward to the borders of the county men are little in evidence. It is pity indeed that they are not more in evidence, for these men of the dales and moors are of a rare virtue and courage, versed in that sublime knowledge which comes only from constant communion with nature. There is a story told in these last stretches of Swaledale which shows what perseverance and energy is bred amongst its people. When the church which Leland found at Keld over three centuries ago was to be repaired in 1789 the folk had little money to spend upon it, and it devolved upon its minister, one Stillman, who must have been a man of rare resource, and of what we nowadays call pluck, to raise the necessary funds. He, nothing daunted, set out for London, performing the journey there and back on foot, begging donations great and small as he went his way, and so came home again with the needed money in his pocket, and able to tell his folk that his expenses had amounted to—sixpence! It is surely the nature of their surroundings that breeds men like this, surely the great, silent hills, awful in their loneliness, the long stretches of solitary moorland,



BIRKDALE TARN

the music of the becks and gills which produces the steadfastness which is the most noticeable feature of the dalesman's character. But the influences of the land from whence the Swale springs cannot be described—to gain but a slight understanding of it a man must needs wander for long days through its valleys and across its moors, and must climb its highest points, there to marvel at the vastness of what is, after all, but the corner of a county.

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