



P R E F A C E .



WHILST preparing in 1891-2 my book on the Craven and North-West Yorkshire Highlands, I was persuaded that some compendious illustrated work dealing with the history, antiquities, and scenery of the adjoining province of Richmondshire was greatly needed. Dr. Whitaker's historical work on the district, published in 1822, I had frequently occasion to consult, and found it to contain many errors and imperfections, while the cost of the book (copies being rarely obtainable under £12), arising principally from the many choice engravings after Turner that it contains, restricts its possession to the hands of but comparatively few. Other books there are on this romantic and attractive country it is true, but these are either purely descriptive or deal with only portions of it. Clarkson's *History of Richmond* (1821), and General Harrison's large folio volume on the *Wapentake of Gilling West* (1885), are both valuable and important works. Of the former it is impossible to speak too highly, and of the latter, a most laborious and painstaking venture, which I have referred to in the body of my book, it must be said that it consists almost entirely of lengthy pedigrees and copies of ancient deeds illustrative of local manorial history, and the book is also too bulky and costly for general use. Longstaffe's little volume on *Richmondshire* and Barker's *Three Days of Wensleydale* are both excellent and now scarce works, but published forty years ago they may be said to be in great measure now out of date.

If therefore I have established a *raison d'être* for this present undertaking, I may say that I have not attempted to compress into a single volume a history and description of the extensive archdeaconry of Richmond, as originally constituted, and embraced by the labours of Dr. Whitaker, above referred to, but have limited my observations to that romantic portion of the old baronial liberty of Richmondshire, which was granted, as explained in the text, out of the great Saxon fief of Earl Edwin to the succeeding lords of Richmond. This comprises all that territory lying within the watersheds of the upper Yore and Swale rivers, and extending in a southerly direction from the great military way of the Romans known as Leeming Lane, to the east of Bedale, and northwards and westwards to the parish of Gilling and the mountain-wilds of Stainmoor and Mallerstang, every portion of which I have personally and carefully explored.

Upon the civil, military, and ecclesiastical history, natural history, antiquities, customs, folk-lore, &c., and of many recent and old-time worthies belonging to this interesting province, I have endeavoured to discourse in a popular and entertaining manner. The beautiful and romantic scenery, which forms so striking and attractive a feature almost everywhere in Richmondshire, I have also endeavoured to illustrate by pen and picture as fully as the limits of space would admit. Both the Swale and Yore valleys, it must be granted, contain some of the finest scenery in England, and they had a rare fascination for the artist, Turner. The valley of the Swale, with its turbulent, rapid river, presents in places almost an Alpine wildness, being deeper and more rugged and confined than that of the Yore, which is altogether of an ampler and more luxuriant character. The district is an ideal one to the tourist and stranger in need of a thoroughly recreative holiday,—a mild but bracing air, many objects of historic and antiquarian interest, and attractive scenery. It is, indeed, beginning to draw large numbers of visitors from all parts, who find homely accommodation at one or other of the inns, farms, or private houses to be met with about the moors and dales. Everywhere, it may be said, there is a copious supply of very pure spring water, and the air, in spite of the heavy rainfall, is particularly free from humidity and fog. In Wensleydale, for example, according to the meteorological returns there are on an average only two (out of some thirty-five) stations in the British Isles where the air is drier than about Aysgarth. This is to be attributed, no doubt, to the remoteness of any great population, to a moderate elevation of site, also to the strata being composed of shale and limestone, which soon absorb the rains, and last but not least to a generally excellent drainage.

The greater part of the area I have dealt with ranges in altitude from about 500 feet to 1200 feet above normal sea level, whilst many of the hills and peaks ascend to 2000 feet and upwards. The higher parts of the dales consist of wide sweeps of heathery moorland—comprising some of the best grouse tracts in England—and from many a neighbouring summit are to be had wide and magnificent prospects. In the lower grounds are the villages, farmsteads, and mansions of the gentry, the land being usually rich and pastoral, also abounding in flowery glades and rocky glens musical with laughing rills or resounding with the thunder of crashing cascades. Much else, too, will be found to interest the visitor, especially the lover of antiquities. The district is peculiarly rich in mediæval architecture, apparent in many an ample fortress, parish church, ruined abbey, and other religious edifice, about which much that is new and interesting has been related in the work. An instance may be cited of the old Knights Templars' Hospice and Chapel on the slopes of Penhill, whereof nothing hitherto has been recorded,

but the interesting history of this romantic institution will be found detailed from its foundation onward for many centuries. Likewise all the ancient camps, cairns, tumuli, house-steads, roads, dykes, and other evidences of prehistoric occupation are described from the author's own observations made on the spot.

The historic narrative claims special notice, having been derived from a great many sources, from local archives as well as from the usual channels of information in the Record Office and British Museum. Many hundreds of letters, documents, and packages have also been received during the preparation of the work, and where so much help has been rendered it is almost invidious to mention names. Many of these I have acknowledged in the text. Nearly every clergyman, I may say, in the area embraced by the work, has rendered me assistance in some form, while many other residents have been equally obliging in their communications of particular facts. For this courteous help I am indeed truly grateful. To the Earl of Wharnccliffe I owe a special tribute of thanks for the trouble incurred in searching records for a history of the Hardraw and other of his Wensleydale estates; to the Hon. W. T. Orde-Powlett (now Lord Bolton) I am also indebted for various help, both literary and in the artistic embellishment of the book. To the Editors of the *Metcalfé Records* I am sensible of the service they have rendered by giving me the unreserved use of these valuable collections, compiled wholly from original and authentic documents, and which have enabled me to correct many old errors and furnish much new information about one of the most numerous and important families in Richmondshire. The chapter on Nappa Hall and the account of the Raydale Riot may, I think, be accepted as the most reliable records of these subjects that have appeared. The Rev. R. V. Taylor, author of *The Churches of Yorkshire, &c.*, has also placed unreservedly in my hands his varied collections relating to Swaledale, which I gratefully acknowledge. Mr. J. Norton Dickons, President of the Bradford Historical Society, has kindly favoured me with the use of many rare volumes, engravings, &c., from his valuable library of Yorkshire books. To Mr. Wm. Horne, F.G.S., of Leyburn, I am obliged for much useful help, rendered not only on the occasion of my visits to Wensleydale, but also by the loan of books, papers, &c. Several of the chapters have had the advantage of revision by him. Mr. Joseph Raine, of Richmond, has also shewn much interest in the work, and to his companionship and guidance I owe many interesting facts and discoveries. Among others who have been particularly helpful in various ways I must mention Mr. John Henry Metcalfe, Easingwold; Mr. John C. C. Routh, Wood Hall, Aysgarth; Dr. J. A. Fothergill, Darlington; Mr. Hector Christie, Jervaux Abbey; Mr. J. H. Hutchinson, Catterick; Lady Clive Bayley,

Ascott ; Mrs. Hutton, Aldburgh Hall ; Mrs. Tyzack, Abbeydale ; Mr. William Porter, Fairfield ; Mr. John Yarker, West Didsbury ; Mr. John Jas. Stead, Heckmondwike ; Mr. Herbert Wroot, Bradford ; Messrs. N. J. Hone and Archibald Head, London.

The illustrations have been provided from a numerous collection of drawings, rare prints, photographs, &c., the greater part of which have been kindly remitted by persons interested in the publication. Many of these have been drawn or, in the case of photographs taken specially for the work. Several are reproduced from scarce engravings and from only known originals. I have also to note a new departure from my previous works by the introduction of a number of excellent portraits, including some well-known names as well as two or three recent centenarians. This is a feature, however, limited strictly to deceased worthies identified with the district. It is indeed to be regretted that from an assortment of several hundred pictures, most of them conspicuous for their excellence or rarity, more could not be used, but the volume as it is exceeds by over one hundred pages what was announced. Most thankfully have I on another page acknowledged the sources from which the many views and portraits have been furnished.

I should observe that the beautiful view of Semerwater (the only lake in Richmondshire), which forms the Frontispiece to the Large Paper edition, has been engraved from the charming picture by J. M. W. Turner, R.A., which is one of the great artist's masterpieces. It has been specially executed and printed for the work by the Swan Electric Engraving Company, who it is evident have taken great pains to reproduce in an efficient manner the spirit and technique of the original. All the other illustrations, by various engravers, have been printed at the works of Mr. George F. Sewell, in Bradford, the printer of this and the two companion volumes of *Craven* and *Nidderdale*, and to whom I think a word here will not be misplaced in acknowledgment of the care and skill evidenced in the execution of the work.

In conclusion I have to thank the large and influential body of subscribers (whose names are printed at the end of the volume) for the encouragement so liberally accorded in the production of the work.

HARRY SPEIGHT.

Bingley, Yorkshire.