

THE
HISTORY & TOPOGRAPHY
OF THE TOWNSHIPS OF
LITTLE TIMBLE, GREAT TIMBLE
AND THE
HAMLET OF SNOWDEN,
IN THE
WEST RIDING OF THE COUNTY OF YORK.

BY

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KNARESBOROUGH," ETC., ETC.

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Preface.



Y reasons for writing this minute piece of history and topography, treating of a district so small, and apparently so insignificant, as the Timbles and Snowden, may be briefly stated as follows:—A desire to put on record something of the history of the village of Great Timble, which has lately been so highly favoured as to become possessed of a free school and library, the munificent gift of a gentleman who can possibly have no other object in view than the mental and moral improvement of the villagers—a possession of which many a place with ten times its population and importance might be justly proud. Such gifts are not of momentary importance; they have an influence extending into future ages, and men and women yet unborn may bless the generous donor. Such actions need no eulogium from me, they speak for themselves with a voice far more distinct and emphatic than mine; yet, the simple recital of such actions may induce other wealthy men to “go and do likewise.”

Another reason, or perhaps an ambition, was to unravel the mystery of the building of Swinsty Hall—that lonely antique gem of the Washburn valley—to test the legend of its foundation, and trace the line of its real builders and owners; and in this object I think I have succeeded.

One more reason was to perpetuate the memory of the residence of Edward Fairfax, the Elizabethan poet, at Newhall, in Little Timble, before even the traditions attached to his name and fame have passed away. His house and lands have disappeared beneath an inland lake; and surely it is an act of

gratitude to attempt to wrest from oblivion the little that is known of the home of one so distinguished in his lifetime.

Snowden is included on account of its proximity, and its being a participant in the benefits accruing from the "Robinson Free School and Library," and also because it has not been mentioned by any of the historians of Wharfedale.

The district has not been distinguished for deeds of heroic virtue, nor, I am happy to say, rendered notorious by crime; it is possessed of no great baronial hall, no battle-field, no monastic establishment, not even a church; so its history must, of necessity, consist of a chronicle of small things; to collect these, and put them in order, has been my aim and object.

To those who have assisted me in the task, I beg to tender my sincere thanks, especially to the Rev. Thomas Parkinson, vicar of North Otterington; to the Rev. J. M. Ashley, vicar of Fewston, for allowing his parish registers to be searched; to the owners of Swinsty Hall, past and present, for much material relative to the mansion and estate; to C. A. Powell, Esq., solicitor, Harrogate, for much valuable information relative to the Forest of Knaresborough; and to Mr. John Dickinson, of Great Timble, for his industry in collecting materials for the history from all parts of the district.

W. G.

HARROGATE,

January 25th, 1895.

ERRATA.

Page 18, line 8, for "Tam Hill," read Tarn Hill.