



WORTHIES, FAMILIES

AND

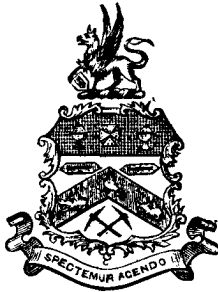
CELEBRITIES

OF

BARNSLEY AND THE DISTRICT.

BY

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P R E F A C E .

BARNSELY and the surrounding district are rich in historical associations connected with residences, families, and persons of note. Among the former we may instance the splendid mansions of Wentworth House and Wentworth Castle, and Wortley, Bretton, Woolley, Houghton, and Cannon Halls, which are not to be surpassed in grandeur, if the limited area within which they are situated is taken into account, by mansions in any other part of Yorkshire. Among the latter we have four families which have passed into the Baronetage from the town of Barnsley alone, viz. :—those of Armytage, Beckett, Wombwell, and Wood, the last named having recently been raised to the peerage, and being represented by so distinguished a peer as Viscount Halifax. Among the individuals of note who have sprung from the neighbourhood, not the least conspicuous are Dr. Nicholas Saunderson, the blind mathematician (one of the most distinguished men this country ever produced); Robert Holgate, Archbishop of York; Joseph Bramah, the celebrated inventor; Sir George Wood, one of the Barons of the Exchequer; John Charles Brooke, the Herald; Thomas Witlam Atkinson, the Siberian Traveller; Sir Thomas Hallifax, one of the Lord Mayors of London; and a host of other celebrities of lesser note.

To briefly delineate the lives and characters of some of these distinguished men the following pages have been written. They are part of an extensive series of papers which were contributed to a local journal during the years 1880-1-2, and were favourably received by the public. At the request of many friends the compiler was induced to revise and republish them in a more complete form, and the present volume contains the first series of these sketches. The work of compiling the materials was commenced many years ago, and as these enquiries and researches advanced, the subject so rose in interest and importance, and the compiler became so enamoured in the pursuit, that he was led to accumulate a large amount of matter which is now offered to the reader, and which will be found to be of an original and interesting character. Not the least interesting portion of the information contained in this volume is that relating to Stainborough and its lords, in the history of which the compiler has ever felt deeply interested, and for which he made large collections. He, however, scarcely ever anticipated being able to give so full an account of the Earls of Strafford, of the second creation, and their princely seat as is here presented—an account which embodies some interesting details, and has been compiled from every available source—not the least important being the voluminous Strafford Papers in the Library of the British Museum, which have been laid largely under contribution for this purpose. No little labour has been entailed upon the writer, but he makes no great pretensions to authorship, and all the merit he claims for the work is that of some degree of industry and application in the researches he has made. The undertaking has been to him a labour of love, and if it affords only a

part of the pleasure to the reader it has done to the compiler, the latter will be satisfied. He has, however, the gratification of knowing that he has done some little to trace out and elucidate the biographical history of families and persons who have been associated with and shed a halo over a town and district of which he claims to be very proud.

The work is illustrated with original portraits and views of some of the characters and their residences. Among the former are portraits of Sir Francis Wood, of Barnsley, and Sir Francis Lindley Wood, of Hemsworth, from oil paintings at Hickleton ; and Sir Thomas Hallifax, from a painting in the Guildhall, London ; while those of Baron Wood, Archbishop Holgate, John Charles Brooke, the Earls of Strafford, and others are from rare and scarce prints. Among the views, those representing the ruins of Houghton Hall, and what remains were to be found forty years ago of Wombwell Hall, the ancient seat of the Wombwell family, and Monk Bretton Priory, will doubtless be looked on with interest.

Materials have been sought for, not only in innumerable costly and scarce books, and in the collections of private individuals, but the manuscript treasures of the British Museum, the Public Record Office, the Lambeth Library, and other sources have been also sedulously searched, so that all the information possible could be brought together for future reference and preservation.

The compiler's thanks are due to a number of gentlemen for the kind interest they have been pleased to take in the work, and for the friendly assistance they have rendered in various ways. Among these are Lord Halifax and Mr. Vernon Wentworth, the late Mr. Charles

Jackson, of Doncaster, for valuable information supplied from his own collections, and for much friendly counsel ; the Rev. W. Consitt Boulter for information relating to Archbishop Holgate ; and the Rev. J. Wood Bayldon for similar contributions respecting his ancestor, Baron Wood ; while Dr. Sykes, of Doncaster, Mr. Charles Newman, and Mr. Alexander Paterson, of Barnsley, have also rendered assistance in various ways.

In conclusion, the compiler returns his warmest thanks to the numerous subscribers who have favoured him with their support. He would venture to add that he has done his best so to arrange and send out the volume as to make it worthy of public appreciation, his principal ambition having been a desire to record whatever can render the town and district of Barnsley more interesting to his fellow townsmen and to strangers. He may further add that it is intended at no distant date to publish a second series of these Worthies, for which much information