



THE
CRAVEN
AND
NORTH-WEST YORKSHIRE
HIGHLANDS.

BEING A COMPLETE ACCOUNT
OF THE
HISTORY, SCENERY, AND ANTIQUITIES
OF THAT ROMANTIC DISTRICT.


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ILLUSTRATED.

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PREFACE.

N Cox's *Magna Britannia*, published in 1731, the material for which, says the title page, was "collected and composed by an impartial Hand," there is the following rather astonishing notice of our district. "A small part of this Hundred so-called [Craven] from the Cragginess of it, in the midst of which stands Skipton, a Market-Town, from thence called Skipton-in-Craven. The exact extent of it we nowhere find, though we meet with several Towns in it ; but since we observe that the Rise of the River Are is in Craven, and that the Earl of Albemarle's Lands in Craven were in length Five Miles, we conclude that this part of the County extended from the Bounds of the Wapentake of Claro to the village of Manlam, not far from Settle, and had a proportionable Breadth." Such was the curiously indefinite manner in which this "impartial hand" was constrained to improve the public mind on the topography of Craven little more than a century and a half ago ! A description of the least known parts of Africa or Siberia could hardly have been more vague.

Still, if we except a few discursive references by some other early writers, this was practically the sum and extent of public knowledge on this romantic corner of Yorkshire until the Rev. Thomas Dunham Whitaker, LL.D., F.S.A., minister of the chapel of Holme, near Whalley, set about the preparation of a History of Craven at the close of the same (last) century. His investigations, which were purely genealogical and historical, resulted in a large and costly volume, which was completed and published in 1805, and is now in the 3rd edition.

Meanwhile no separate and less expensive treatise upon this highly interesting area has appeared, beyond two or three small local guide books. That some such intermediate work, dealing not only with historical subjects, but with every aspect of the country, would be useful

and acceptable has long seemed likely to the present writer. A long and close familiarity with the district,—the home of his ancestors for many centuries,—has therefore tempted him to produce a book, which will be found in great measure to supplement the writings of Whitaker, while at the same time an effort has been made to furnish in a chatty and entertaining manner, an account of everything of interest relating to the scenery, physical history, and antiquities of the area comprised. With respect to prehistoric remains, although much has been written about the cairns, barrows, earthworks, and cave-explorations in the district, yet the author is only too conscious how much remains to be done in this branch, and what investigations have yet to be made in order to arrive at the full historic value, as well as the consequent influences of the occupation of the country by Celt, Roman, Saxon, and Dane.

So far as the scenic and physical aspects of the area are concerned, the author believes this to be the first time in any topographical work that an attempt has been made to deal with these and the civil and ecclesiastical history simultaneously, by tracing upwards the origin of a place, scientifically and historically, and recording as much as can be gathered about it, within reasonable limits. The natural phenomena of every important scene are explained as simply and concisely as possible, while a very complete notice of the numerous caverns and pot-holes, or ground-chasms, is given, as may be ascertained on turning to the index (under "Caves") at the end of the volume. A more or less extended account has been given of the Craven and bordering parishes, while the histories of such places as Bentham, Ingleton, Horton-in-Ribblesdale, and Dent, which are but slightly touched on by Whitaker, have been dealt with at length.

A reference to the Summary of Chapters, in conjunction with the Map, will show the topographical direction and method of the two divisions of the work. Commencing with Giggleswick and Settle, the first part includes all the country extending westwards by Clapham, Bentham, and Ingleton, to Kirkby Lonsdale; the second part begins with Skipton, and traces the country northwards to Langstrothdale and Yore Head, and westwards to Dent and Sedbergh, concluding with the environs of Sedbergh southwards to Kirkby Lonsdale, where the first part terminates. The lower, and less romantic division of Craven, lying chiefly to the south of the Craven Fault, has not been taken up.

It may be noted that the term HIGHLANDS, (which the writer is not aware has ever previously been used to describe the mountainous parts of Yorkshire), has been adopted in the title of the work, as it appears both suitably and briefly descriptive of the character of the country embraced, in contradistinction to the lower and less prominent parts of the Deanery of Craven, south of the great Fault, above mentioned.

Almost every nook and corner of the district, it may again be observed, has been familiar to the author from his earliest years, yet in spite of this—a mere geographical acquaintance after all—very considerable research and enquiry have been involved in portraying and supplementing the historical associations of the places. So much so, indeed, that the author regrets exceedingly the impossibility of making here more than a general and grateful recognition of the valuable assistance which he has received from numerous residents in the dales, both rendered to him personally on the spot, and by material and facts furnished to him afterwards. During the actual writing of the book many hundreds of letters have been received, and there is scarcely a village or a hamlet in the area dealt with where he is not indebted to one or other of its inhabitants for information courteously supplied. On such occasions in the work where the opportunity has offered acknowledgment of this help has been made.

For photographs and other views from which the engravings have been taken, as well as for the loan of several blocks, the author begs to express his indebtedness as follows: To Mr. A. Horner, Settle, for photographs of Giggleswick (p. 67), Catterick Force (p. 95), Settle from the West (p. 97), Entrance to the Victoria Cave (p. 120), Clapham (p. 145), Gaping Gill Hole (p. 159), Norber Boulder (p. 170), Otterburn (p. 308), Long Preston Church (p. 369), Penyghent from Horton Station, (p. 391), and Ling Gill (p. 405); to Thomas Brayshaw, Esq., Settle, for blocks of Settle in 1822 (p. 82), and Celtic Wall, near Smearside (p. 109); to Mr. E. Handby, Settle, for photograph of Giggleswick Scars (p. 101); to Robert D. Barnish, Esq., Blackburn, for photograph of Stainforth Force (p. 135); to the Rev. F. W. Joy, M.A., F.S.A., Bentham Rectory, for photographs of Bentham (p. 186) and Bentham Church Font (p. 193); to Bryan Charles Waller, Esq., Masongill, for photograph of Over Hall (p. 269); to Mr. R. L. Simpson, Kirkby Lonsdale, for photographs of Devil's Bridge (p. 274), the Lune in Flood at Devil's Bridge (p. 275), and Underley Hall (p. 289); to Mr. Lister, Malham, for photographs of Malham Tarn (p. 293), Skirethorns Cave (p. 319), and Bordley

Hall (p. 322) ; to the Rev. C. J. Marsden, M.A., Gargrave Vicarage, for block of Gargrave Church ; to Mr. J. B. Smithson, Leyburn, for photographs of Kilnsey Crag (p. 330), Kettlewell (p. 333), and Hubberholme Church (p. 340) ; to the Rev. A. Cross, M.A., Giggleswick School, for drawing of plan of Rathmell Barrows (p. 379) ; to George Swift, Esq., B.A., Dent, for photographs of Dent (p. 424), and Ibbby Peril (p. 423). The views of Hardraw Scar (p. 414), Garsdale (p. 419), and On the Rawthey, Sedbergh (p. 438), are from photographs by Messrs. Frith. Many of these views represent out-of-the-way places, and scenes but little known or not previously taken, and the author is particularly indebted to those gentlemen who have been at the trouble of obtaining the views specially for the work.

The superior and very beautiful full-page Frontispiece to the Large Paper edition has been engraved by Messrs. Annan and Swan, London, from an original photograph supplied by Mr. A. Horner, of Settle.

The author, in conclusion, may refer to the fact that as the work has been published by subscription, he has pleasure in acknowledging the liberal and influential support received from upwards of five hundred subscribers, who have thus aided him in its publication. The names of the subscribers have been printed at the end of the volume.