



# ILKLEY: ANCIENT & MODERN,

BY THE

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*NEW YORK, U.S.A.,*

AND

J. HORSFALL TURNER.

WITH CHAPTERS ON ITS

GEOLOGY, BY J. W. DAVIS, F.G.S., F.S.A., F.L.S. ;

BOTANY, BY F. ARNOLD LEES, F.L.S., ETC. ;

FAUNA, BY W. EAGLE CLARKE, W. DENISON ROEBUCK, AND J. W. TAYLOR ;

PREHISTORIC REMAINS, BY SEVERAL AUTHORS.

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*EIGHTY ILLUSTRATIONS.*

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OTLEY :

WM. WALKER & SONS, PRINTERS, &c.

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MAY BE HAD ALSO FROM J. HORSFALL TURNER, IDEL, BRADFORD.

—  
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## Preface.



FARFEDALE is suggestive of, I had almost said synonymous with, everything beautiful in nature. Its scenic beauty has been the theme of poets and artists, from the time the first poet or painter cast his eyes on the fair landscape. Wordsworth and Turner head the lists. It was very fitting that Farnley Hall, in this valley, should be graced with a superb collection of Turner's paintings. Every conceivable tint, in sky or tree, may be noticed from the windows at Farnley, and, passing upwards to Ilkley parish, we find rich meadows in the vale, luxuriant foliage in the highland dells, gushing fountains, sullen mountain streams, gurgling rills, roaring waterfalls, tumbling cataracts, and cheerful, sparkling river; mountain grandeur, unscalable precipices, stern, frowning rocks, heath-covered, sweet-scented moorland, musical with the song of bees, or enveloped in mist or snow. Seated on every variety of cliff and crag, the visitor here can feast his eyes and inhale the genial zephyrs, or face the bracing air on mountain top. Village scenes, charming country lanes, honest peasants, wholesome food, and all that makes a happy, contented country, abound. Here we are far away from busy towns, from long, smoky chimneys, factory "buzzers," whirling wheels, and screeching railway engines. In Spring, the primrose, in Autumn, the blackberry tempt us to linger as we pass along. Nature has been lavish of her charms in this vale.

The Wharfe rises four miles beyond the small hamlet of Beckermonds, where it leaves the mountains, and in four more miles reaches Hubberholme, with its ancient church and dozen houses. Five miles lower, passing Buckden and Starbotton (the scene of a remarkable flood, two centuries ago), is Kettlewell, and, receiving the Skirfare and Cowside beck from Arncliffe, a suitable name from the eagle cliffe behind it, Kilnsey, with its huge limestone scar, is reached in three more miles. Passing Grassington and Burnsall, Barden Tower is reached in eight or nine miles, and, forcing its way through the Strid and two or three miles glen of Bolton Woods, the renowned Abbey is reached. The Duke of Devonshire has added every facility that tourist can wish. Short of three miles, Addingham is reached, and a further three brings us to Ilkley. No little time must be spent ere the traveller may say he has fairly viewed this wonderful variety of landscape. Each place mentioned requires a day in justice to the varied scenery, and with Copley's *On Foot through Wharfedale* as a guide, much satisfaction will be the result.

Entering Wharfedale by Menston, the Mensington of olden times, leaving the broadening lower valley to the East with Saxon Otley, two miles away, and Weston, of the Vavasours, still nearer, we pass Burley, the residence of the Rt. Hon. W. E. Forster ; the modern mansion of Denton is shortly afterwards seen across the river—an old home of the Fairfaxes ; and the gladdening sight of Ben Rhydding and Ilkley crags, Llecan in British, show us we have reached the Eastern portion of Upper Wharfedale.

Within the strongholds of Olicana, more than a thousand foreign soldiers held sway in Roman times. Its varied story since, we have attempted in the following pages.

As this is the first attempt, of any moment, in giving the history of Ilkley, some consideration is due for any lack of arrangement that may

be observed. The acquisition of interesting facts, such as notes from old deeds and the unearthing of a Roman gravestone, demanded insertion, although the proper chapters had been worked off. Such accidents are peculiar to a first edition, and the serious attempt at publication often calls forth a willingness to open private archives, which serves beneficially for a second edition. We have indicated some undisturbed nests of great interest to the historian, but unavailable for present use.

Our obligations we have endeavoured to acknowledge, as will be seen throughout our pages. For pictorial help we have to thank Messrs. Harper, of New York, for the gift of Holling Hall and Upper Brook Street blocks; Mr. Dodgson, of Leeds, for most of the small blocks in the Prehistoric chapter; Mr. Harrison, of Bingley, and Mr. Smith, of Morley, for loans of four blocks each. To Messrs. S. Margerison, John Thornton, J. Young, Joseph Margerison, and W. Scruton, we are indebted for gratuitous artistic labour. Mr. Romilly Allen allowed his illustrations to be copied. Dr. Collyer knows best how the plates by Mr. Sabin have been acquired. To the late William Middelton, Esq., J. E. F. Chambers, Esq., Miss Snowdon, the Rev. A. C. Downer, Rev. C. B. Norcliffe, His Grace the Duke of Devonshire, W. Margerison, John Dobson, and James Lister, Esquires, we are under obligations for many privileges.

Any additions or corrections will be thankfully received, and duly acknowledged. We have purposely retained various ways of spelling the proper names. Typographical errors may be found on

p. 91. *Edward* Beanlands, *Hew* Crofts. Five old Yeates.

[ ] Mrs. Heber's death, 1640, should be 1740. It is questionable whether the Parsonage mentioned in the Nesfield rolls was not the Ilkley parsonage.

The North Yorkshire Middeltons, it is feared, are a little confused with the Stockeld family, page 80.

Mr W. Carr, of Gomersal, nephew of the Rev. W. Carr, gave the stone (p. 28,) "Pudens" to Archdeacon Boyd. Canon Raine sees no reason to withdraw the ascription of the stone, p. 27, to Hercules, and the "group" stone, p. 28, he says, has nothing to do with Christianity. Pudens is a name found in 2 Tim. IV. (*Old Yorkshire V. 199.*)

Bolton and Denton, on either hand, have been tempting fields, but we have studiously kept within parish bounds, and have been able, more or less perfectly, to shew that, besides those two historic places, Wharfedale is no barren region for the antiquary.

Under the conviction that it is premature to theorize as to the origin and purposes of the Prehistoric remains, I have curtailed that chapter as much as possible, leaving the bare theories to stand tests that time alone can bring. We need researches on all our Yorkshire moors, indicating where all are found, and where some remains are found and others wanting.

It is but just to Dr. Collyer to state that he has had no opportunity of reading the proof-sheets.

*Idel, Bradford.*  
*June 30, 1885.*

J. HORSFALL TURNER.





# History of the Town and Parish of Alkley,

## CHAPTER I.—Llecan.



ALKLEY takes its name, good scholars imagine, from Llecan, the old British word for rock; and Ptolemy, the geographer, who wrote in the first half of the second century, calls the place Olecanon. It is Olicana in Richard of Cirencester; in the Domesday Book, Illicleia; in the first Charter after Domesday, given by William de Percy, Hilleclaia; in another, a few years later, Illelaya; and in another later still, Illeclat. In 1220 they spell the name Illeclay, touching nearly the modern sound, but one scribe of that era, who seems to have had a special genius for spelling, manages to make it Yelleilaia. In the Bolton Computus, A.D. 1290 to 1325, it is Ilkeley; in Kirkby's Inquest, A.D. 1285, Yelkeley; in Speed's Chronicle, Hekeley; and on the rustic tongue it is Heethlay.

The town, when we hear of it for the first time in human history, is one of the ten strongholds of the old fighting Brigantes, and if we count in with them certain poor cousins, the Parisii, who held a place of their own at the south-east corner, close by the sea, Llecan stood exactly in the centre of the sturdy little kingdom which was bounded on the North by the Tyne, on the South by a rough line drawn from the Humber to the Mersey, on the East by the German Ocean, and on the West by the Irish sea.

In Leman's map of the Celtic and Belgic tribes, with their towns and track-ways, one of these track-ways comes down from the North to Catteric, and then opens East and West. The western branch runs right

through Ilkley, and thence taking the form of a rude bow, resting on its lower half, it bends round through Chester to Holyhead, and there it strikes the sea, while the eastern branch runs through Aldborough, the ancient capital of the Brigantian kingdom, and then shoots South by East clean away to London.

Ptolemy gives Olecanon the rank and title of a city, but he means no more by this than what we should call a log fort in the woods, because Strabo says—"The forests of the Britons are their cities, for when they have enclosed a space with felled trees, they build within it houses of a frail sort, and hovels for their cattle"—and Cæsar says they add, for the defence of their towns, a mound and a ditch. So we can see dimly, but with some certainty, what sort of place Llecan was in these old days before the Romans came, and why it was selected for one of the ten strongholds. The site would be chosen for this purpose by the first tribe that ever made its way up the river, with any insight for a point which could be easily defended. They would find a fine rugged eminence, with a river on the North, of an ampler volume, no doubt, than now, for all the streams dwindle as the forests are cut down, deep gullies to the East and West, with swift, strong streams running through them from the moors, and on the South the great craggy steep. There was still a rude circle of rocks on the reach behind the old White Wells fifty years ago, tumbled into such confusion that you had to look once, and again before you saw what lay under your eyes; the stones were very large, and there was no trace of lime about them, and this may have been a rude outpost of the tribe for the defence of the great living spring, perhaps, and also of Llecan, lying far below. Be this as it may, here was the very choicest spot on the river for such a stronghold as the Brigantes would build. Good grass for the cattle in the openings of the woods, plenty of fish and game in the waters and the forest, and this central position which made Llecan as the boss on a shield. It is, no doubt, true also that these Brigantes were rough men to handle in a fight, and confronted all comers with such a steady courage that even the masters of the world kept their distance for many years after the tribes in the South were in some sort subdued; and then, when at last the Roman found he must fight them, it seems clear that he "struck under the belt."

The sovereign of the Brigantes, about A.D. 50, was a woman—Cartismandua—and as the capital of her kingdom was not far away, and Llecan was in the centre of it, her false face must have been almost as well known in our town as in her own. She was the wife of Venutius, the chief of a tribe in the Midlands, and of kin, by this marriage, to Caractacus, a soldier of the grandest barbarian type. He was Prince of the Silures, whose land lay far away South by West, and had to face the Romans first, as they forced their way slowly North and East. He was beaten in a great stern battle, had to flee for mere life, and the chance of fighting them again, and in this extremity he turned his face toward Cartismandua, thinking she would give him shelter and succour. Look-

ing again at the old map, one can see dimly where he would strike the track-way in his flight, and make for Llecan, and then, after a rest and refreshment, let us hope, steal down the river, and across the country to Iseur, feeling sure he would then be safe. He was wofully mistaken; my lady was of quite another mind, she had come to an understanding already with the common enemy, and was quite ready to barter loyalty toward her luckless kinsman for what it would bring. So she gave Caractacus back a prisoner to the Romans, and thereby gave him the chance she could not dream of, through which he is set for ever to shine like a star in the immortal pages of Tacitus. But this was not the end of her evil work. She must needs fall in love with a lusty fellow who was much about her, and for his sake she discarded Venutius to the wrath and shame of those among her own people who still nourished the old traditions of virtue and cleanness of life held among their kinsmen. So there was a fatal division in the tribe, some stood still by the throne, some went over to Venutius, who would fain strike for his self-respect. They took to their weapons on both sides with a will, and then the danger grew until Cartismandua begged aid of the Legions, and they were quite ready to help her, if by so doing they could plant a foot between the door and the door-post. They sent troops to uphold the tottering throne, and once within the lines, the subjection of the Brigantes was well begun. The gates of Llecan and the rest of the strongholds were opened from within through this division in the stout old fighting tribe, and it may be that if there had been no such division, the line of the Roman conquest could not have been carried beyond the line of the natural fastnesses which cut the waters flowing toward the Eastern and Western seas.

Indications of the existence here of these or earlier tribes will be subsequently referred to in the chapter entitled, for want of a better name, *Prehistoric*.

