

# KIRKBY OVERBLOW AND DISTRICT.

BEING A RECORD OF THE HISTORY,  
ANTIQUITIES, FOLK-LORE, AND OLD CUSTOMS  
OF THE  
ANCIENT PARISH OF KIRKBY OVERBLOW,  
IN THE WEST RIDING OF YORKSHIRE

WITH  
BRIEF NOTICES OF ADJACENT PLACES.

BY  
HARRY SPEIGHT,

AUTHOR OF "LOWER WHARFEDALE," "UPPER WHARFEDALE,"  
"NIDDERDALE AND THE GARDEN OF THE NIDD," "TWO THOUSAND YEARS  
OF TADCASTER HISTORY," "CHRONICLES OF OLD BINGLEY," &c.

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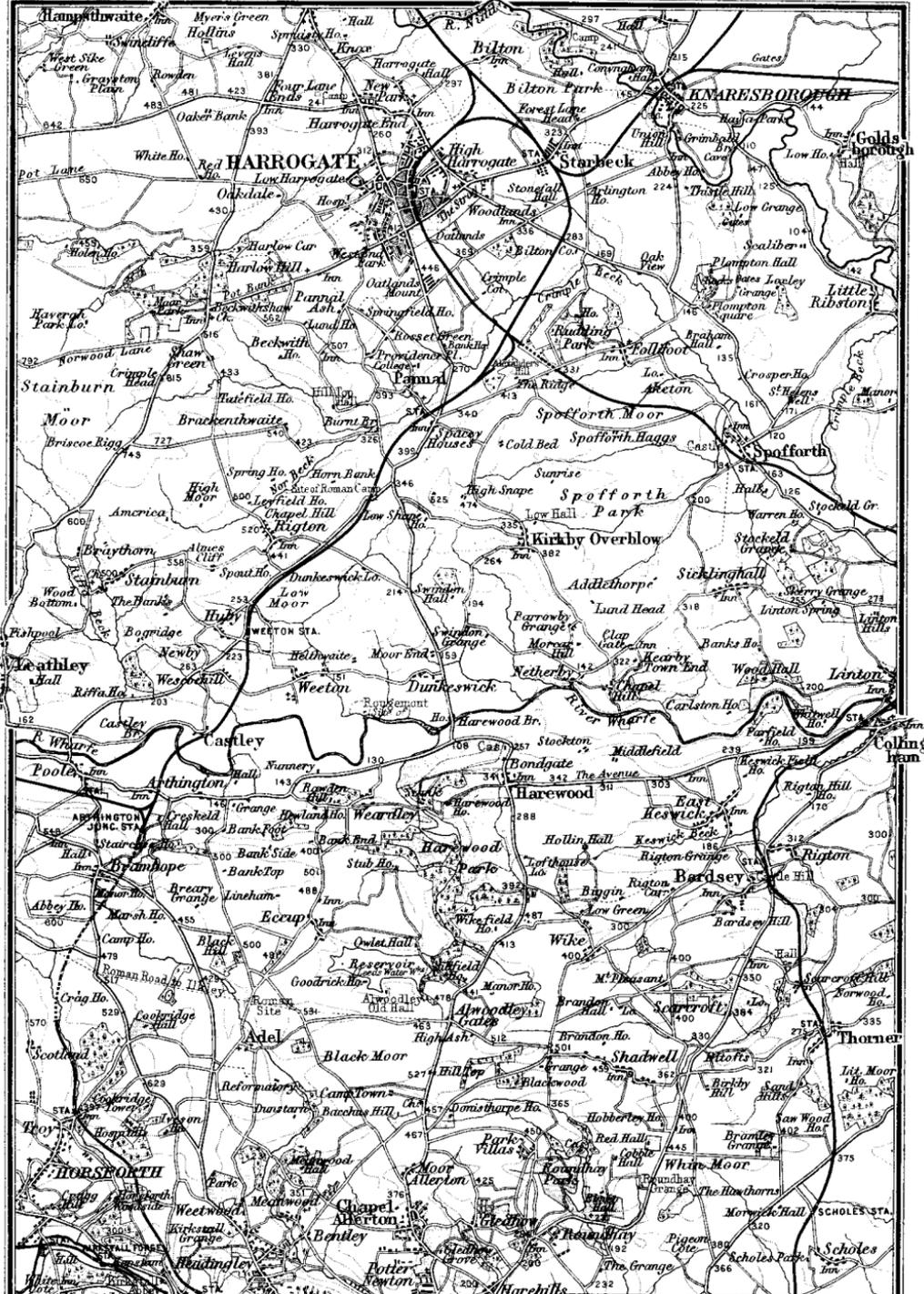
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MAP TO ILLUSTRATE  
**KIRKEBY OVERBLOW**  
 AND DISTRICT  
 BY HARRY SPEIGHT.  
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## P R E F A C E.

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IT is remarkable that if we except the upland and scattered township of Stainburn, with its quaint Norman church, and the neighbouring picturesque heights of Almes Cliff, the ancient parish of Kirkby Overblow has been almost ignored by the topographer and tourist. Yet despite this neglect it possesses a more than ordinary importance and interest. Part of its large extent was embraced in the Royal Forest of Knaresborough, while among its illustrious landowners were the lordly Abbots of Fountains (the parish having given an Abbot to that wealthy monastery), the noble houses of Percy and Mowbray, the great Earls of Albemarle and Devon, the Barons Cantilupe and Aldburgh, the De Lancasters, the powerful Barons of Kendal and lords of Lancaster, the famous Bishop-statesman, Chancellor Burnell, the veteran Lord Fairfax, the Nevilles of the days of chivalry, the Vavasours, Nortons, Plumptons, Stapletons, and many others. The story of these connections with the parish, as well as of the many distinguished incumbents of its valuable rectory,—reaching far back almost to the Conquest,—should give to this ancient parish an almost national interest.

Originally it had been my intention to have included this long life-story in the volume on “LOWER WHARFEDALE,” into which it properly falls, but as that work had greatly exceeded the prescribed limits, there was no alternative but to make a supplementary volume of the work now submitted. Short as the story may appear, it has involved no inconsiderable research among original archives.

My thanks are especially due to the present indefatigable rector of the parish, the Rev. Charles Handcock, who has been unremitting in his attentions on behalf of this project. He has, I fear at much personal inconvenience, conducted me about the parish, assisted in the transcription of the parish documents, looked over most of the proofs, and in many other ways manifested a generous interest in the progress of the work, that I cannot but ever gratefully remember.

To Mr. Hugh Bateson, Clerk to the Parish Council, I am also greatly indebted for much useful literary help and for his particular efforts in bringing this work to the notice of the inhabitants of the district, whose patronage and support are heartily appreciated.

Much interesting information has been received from outside quarters, and especially from the late Chas. Macro Wilson, Esq., of Bolsterstone, to whom I am indebted for very many particulars derived from the Wilson MSS. which have enabled me to construct most of the Dodson pedigree given on page 78.

H. SPEIGHT.