



UPPER WHARFEDAILE.

BEING A COMPLETE ACCOUNT OF THE
HISTORY, ANTIQUITIES AND SCENERY
OF THE PICTURESQUE
VALLEY OF THE WHARFE,
FROM OTLEY TO LANGSTROTHDALE.

BY

HARRY SPEIGHT,

AUTHOR OF "ROMANTIC RICHMONDSHIRE"; "NIDDERDALE AND THE GARDEN OF THE NIDD";
"CRAVEN AND NORTH-WEST YORKSHIRE HIGHLANDS," ETC.

ILLUSTRATED.

LONDON :
ELLIOT STOCK, 62, PATERNOSTER ROW, E.C.
1900.

Entered at Stationers' Hall.

PREFACE.



THE present treatise on Upper Wharfedale is offered in continuation of the series of my published volumes on the history, antiquities and scenery of the Yorkshire Dales. The work, I must own, makes no pretence to literary excellence, nor is absolute accuracy in all details guaranteed, yet I humbly claim it to be the fullest and I hope the most reliable survey of the district embraced now extant. While much of a general and descriptive character has been written on this exceedingly popular and picturesque valley, it must be noted that with the exception of such records as are contained in the *History of Craven* by Dr. Whitaker, first published in 1805, no attempt has hitherto been made to deal succinctly and adequately with the varied concerns of its extensive parishes in what may be considered the spirit of modern topographical enquiry. Dr. Whitaker, followed by his able editor, Mr. A. W. Morant, F.S.A., will always be honored for the great value of his original researches, which however principally concern manorial history and the titles and lineage of the great lords who had either by inheritance or purchase a possessory right in the soil. His work, moreover, embracing the whole of the ancient and extensive Deanery of Craven is a bulky and costly volume.

In the present effort to describe a more limited area of this picturesque part of Yorkshire, I have supplemented and corrected where I have been able the historical records of Dr. Whitaker. At the same time I have endeavoured to make the work interesting by the introduction of a variety of other topics, such as geological descriptions, notes on natural history (a very rich field), folk-lore and old customs (which surviving in retired country places may often be traced to their Anglo-Saxon or even remote Celtic origins) as also traditions, legends, and anecdotes of persons and things; subjects in fact that possess a fascination to the general reader. The whole work is also brought down to date.

Originally it was my intention to have embraced in one volume a survey of the whole of the Wharfe valley from the parish of Cawood to the source of the river in the solitudes of Langstrothdale. But such a scheme would have necessitated the omission of a great deal of valuable original material, inasmuch as the records, together with the varied interest attaching to such parishes as Tadcaster, Wetherby, and Thorp Arch, not to mention other places within the attractive region of the Lower Wharfe, are quite sufficient to make a portly volume in themselves. In order therefore to do adequate justice to the whole subject I proposed in the Prospectus issued in connection with this present work to deal with the valley in two volumes, the first to embrace UPPER WHARFEDAILE and the second (not less interesting) LOWER WHARFEDAILE; and care has been taken by this arrangement not to interfere with the collaboration and completeness of the whole.

Resident as I have always been in the vicinity of Wharfedale, the charmingly-picturesque valley has been familiar to me from early boyhood, and its abounding attractions have always possessed to me more than ordinary delight. Thousands of happy hours I have spent in the valley* and I have walked thousands of miles throughout its length and breadth, observing and noting every visible feature and object of interest, while my maternal ancestors, as will be seen from the pedigree on pages 338-9, have lived in the ancient parishes of Skipton and Burnsall, and probably within sound of the bells of Bolton Abbey, for more than five hundred years. Folk of no State distinction they ever were, but humble commoners as the Fates made them, racy of the soil from which they sprang, ready ever to serve their country and their God; men who under the banner of the "Shepherd Lord" shared England's hopes and glory on the memorable Field of Flodden, or who taking up arms as their consciences dictated for King or for Parliament joined in the strife that led to the fateful day of Marston Moor.

In the preparation of this book therefore, I have had ample material from which to build up the story of every parish from the first evidences of its life. I have noted and described, I believe, every object of historical and archæological interest, all the ancient camps, cairns, tumuli, stone circles, marked stones, house-steads, roads, dykes, and other evidences of prehistoric occupation. But in so wide a district, comprising vast extents of wild fell and uncultivated moorland, there may possibly be some object or remains of this kind, which have escaped notice, obscured as they may be by centuries' growth of peat and turf. Some of these overgrown prehistoric sites, as for example the extensive encampment within the township of Thorpe in Burnsall parish, I have been guided to discover merely by acquaintance with the Celtic names of the sites where they lie. In the light, too, feeble often though it be, of these ancient place-

names, as also of sculptured rocks, crosses, holy-wells, church symbolism and the like, I have been able to form some interesting conclusions on the occupation of the district from remote pagan to early Christian times. Things likewise that enable us to speak of the gradual abandonment of crude religious beliefs, and of the nobler aims and art of the people brought about by the development and spread of Christianity.

The original settlements and orthographical interpretation of the various places dealt with, have been based on carefully-considered historical and philological evidences, and in all cases with due deference to the original character of the sites and remains so far as their existing aspects enable us to determine them.

Coming to the period of actual written evidences, almost every parish chest and available archive, locally as well as in London, Wakefield, and York, has been examined, including old Sessions' Records, Wills, Fines, Inquisitions, Pipe Rolls, Charter Rolls, Close Rolls, Patent Rolls, Chancery Proceedings, Calendar of State Papers, Heralds' Visitations, Archbishopal and other Registers, as well as most of the publications of the learned societies and thousands of valuable newspaper cuttings collected by me during past years. Some of the parishes and places but lightly touched on by Whitaker, such as Otley, Leathley, Addingham, Burley and Grassington, I have dealt with at length. The much-visited localities of Bolton Abbey and Barden Tower I have also treated in somewhat considerable detail. For much of the information related about these places I am indebted to the generous condescension of His Grace the Duke of Devonshire for the privilege of an inspection of the charters and numerous old documents at Bolton Hall, facilities for the examination of which were courteously given by His Grace's steward, Mr. Alfred Downs. Many items of more than local interest have thus been brought to light, including some account of the historic Barden Tower, and the life that gathered round it during the stirring epoch of the famous "Shepherd Lord." Some fragments are also offered of a long-lost cell or religious house at Marton-in-Craven, and of the ancient "Wake" of St. Cuthbert at Embsay, a great annual event at one time, but the recollection of which must long have been forgotten.

The history of manorial and other families and biographical sketches of local worthies, including abstracts from unpublished deeds and pedigrees, have received commensurate attention. Likewise every notable building, ecclesiastical as well as domestic, has been described from my own personal observations, such descriptions in many cases being aided by engravings illustrative of special features.

In the preparation of a work of this character, it is a pleasure to state that I have been very willingly assisted by many of the gentry and other residents in Wharfedale. Indeed, there is not a village or

a hamlet that I do not owe to one or more of its inhabitants facts of more or less importance obtained or related to me personally on the spot, or communicated to me by letter at various times. Every clergyman in the Dale too, from Otley to Langstrothdale, has been most obliging in allowing me to inspect the old parish books, registers, and other documents in their keeping, from which I have been able to make many useful abstracts and interesting reflections on past life in the Dale. It is a matter of much regret that I cannot mention every one separately by name and am perforce obliged to make this general acknowledgment of help so ungrudgingly rendered.

Outside the district information has also reached me from almost all quarters of the globe. It is impossible to acknowledge the kind communications of every writer. To the Rt. Hon. Lord Hawkesbury I am particularly indebted for various information communicated in the midst of his many and pressing duties, and especially for his assistance in preparing the useful and important pedigree of the noble House of Cavendish, as all the published pedigrees of the Dukes of Devonshire are singularly deficient and inaccurate. The Rev. J. R. Baldwin, East Barton; the Rev. W. C. Kendall, Aysgarth, Mr. Wm. C. Maude, Bournemouth, and Mr. Cecil Tennant, F.S.A., London, have also courteously complied with my wish to furnish a detailed lineage of their respective families, which are among the oldest in Upper Wharfedale and its neighbourhood. To Major Parker, of Browsholme Hall, I owe an explanation of some difficulties in connection with the Currer pedigree, printed on pages 248-9, which has enabled me to connect that historic family with my old yeoman ancestors, the Moorhouses, referred to above.

I have also had the use of two small unpublished manuscript volumes on a part of Wharfedale, kindly placed in my hands by Mr. W. Venables Rhodes, of Cleckheaton. They are of no historic value, but are interesting as being the earliest prose volumes on Wharfedale extant, containing several pen and ink illustrations, and dated on the title-page 1807. The author's name is not stated. They contain, however, some useful particulars on contemporary events such as the running of the coaches, holding of markets, descriptions of buildings, &c., then existing, and wherever I have quoted from them acknowledgment has been made. To Mr. John Hopkinson, F.R.Met.S., St. Albans, I am indebted for the valuable Tables of Rainfall in Wharfedale, printed on pages 19-21. Mr. Francis Darwin, J.P., of Creskeld, has supplied many useful notes, and he has also been good enough to revise the proofs of the chapters on Bramhope and Pool. Very little hitherto has been recorded of these places. For various other kindly help, information, loan of papers, &c., my thanks are due to the Rev. Canon Beanlands, M.A., Victoria, British Columbia; the Rev. Thos. Parkinson, North Otterington, the Rev.

T. Basil Woodd, M.A., London ; Sir James Ramsay, Bart., M.A., Bamff, Messrs. T. E. Yorke, Bewerley Hall; Arthur C. Benson, Eton; Geo. B. Nesfield, London ; W. G. Collingwood, M.A., Coniston; John Varley, C.E., Skipton, J. W. Clay, F.S.A., Brighouse ; J. R. Boyle, F.S.A., Hull ; Richd. E. Leach, M.A., Appleby, J. W. A. Black, Bradford, Wm. Butterfield, Bradford; David Longbottom, Silsden, J. A. Clapham, Bingley; J. Norton Dickons, Bradford; John J. Stead, Heckmondwike; Gilbert Metcalfe and Nathaniel J. Hone, London.

The illustrations from which the engravings have been made and which form a conspicuous and useful feature of the book, have been remitted from various quarters, and many of them have been specially taken for the work. They include also some valuable and scarce originals. In preference to an enumeration here of the names of those who have been good enough to allow me to engrave their views, portraits, &c., I have, in accordance with my usual plan, indicated on pages 16 to 18 the sources from which they have been derived.

The bulk of the pictures have been engraved and the printing of the book and binding have been executed at the works of Mr. William Holmes, Ulverston. The quality of this work must be left to speak for itself.

In conclusion, my thanks are due to the numerous and influential body of subscribers whose patronage has materially assisted me in the publication of the work. Their names are printed at the end of the volume.

HARRY SPEIGHT.

BINGLEY, YORKSHIRE,
Midsummer, 1900.