

# MEMORIAM

H. J. Rolfe at 57 died on Monday the 29<sup>th</sup> of August 1881.

Art loses a devoted follower and the whole angling fraternity experiences a loss which cannot be replaced; we may have another fish artist but another Rolfe we certainly shall not even find. There is no pleasanter lounge or place of gossip than the little studio of "the sea-bird painter" as his familiar friends pleasantly called him in Nicholas Lane City. Cutting from the street of the Lombards where Plutus is worshipped in many an enormous temple to the busy thoroughfare of King William Street the main artery to London Bridge you passed through one of those narrow little thoroughfares with which the city abounds; almost two-thirds down on the left hand side you would probably be struck with some one picture out of a dozen or so exhibited in a modest unpretending window - a "sterring" probably or the work of some other equally popular and well known artist. Peeping in at the open door inside beyond the entrance you would see a small apartment to which the window pertained, thronged with pictures of all sorts and sizes. If you were known and had the entrée, or if you desired to transact business with the proprietor you would enter and see beyond a half-drawn curtain - the studio, a nice cozy nook with "the Baron" himself as he was called, seated at an easel touching and retouching a noble salmon which is bounding from the water with a fly in his mouth and a broken eel attached and which is entitled "a hap for liberty" probably, or some other similar affiche for he was fond of apt titles for his pictures and very clever in devising them. The glittering scales come out life-like and clear under his skilful touch as he chats away pleasantly with some old friend or associate the while. Smoking the inseparable pipe without which he never did anything - on his head is the - almost equally inseparable fez - A striking figure much over 6 feet in height with very handsome features which a grave kindly smile from time to time overspreads rarely deepening into anything approaching laughter. Let us listen to the conversation, two companions, probably some angling friend or clubber or haply a customer from one of the great business centres adjacent is speaking. "Still you - Baron he behaved shamefully and I never will look over it" - "Now, now, now, look here old fellow - how - how well and I have known you for years, you are two good fellows, and you two shouldn't quarrel and be



ill-friends I will not hear of it; If he said anything of the sort I'm sure he never meant it unkindly, or as you take, I'm sure you're mistaken, why should he say a thing like that? you had not given him any reason "Not I, not at all, nor I never" - No no of course not, nor did he you may depend on it, there is some mistake some misunderstanding. Don't fall out, you'll both be sorry for it afterwards; I shall see him at the Club tomorrow and will talk to him &c &c" or, "Well if you do did so too I am sorry for it I don't want to remember it, and if he speaks to me at the dinner I shall take no notice of it. It's a pity there should be any ill-feeling" - He hated scandal and always put it aside. He could not abide quarreling or ill-blood and if two friends fell out he was quite unhappy until the breach had been healed again. - There was a great deal of the simple kindly Waltonian feeling in the dear old painter which made him beloved by all who came in contact with him. Charitable and liberal to a degree in all his dealings, no struggling friend could ever want a helping hand if Rolfe could by any means compass it. His art and his purse, a kindly manner and a persuasive tongue were at the service of his friends at any and all seasons. He was always giving a presentation picture to help this or that society all over the country. His works are too well known to need special notice here. In earlier life he illustrated largely in the old sporting magazine and some of the most beautiful engravings there were from subjects of Rolfe's creation. As an angler he was chiefly devoted to spinning - being but an indifferent fly fisher. Indeed he rarely cared to handle the fly rod, but with his "bottle of pickles" as he called a small bottle of preserved minnows which he usually carried about with him and about which many amusing stories are told - he was very deadly. He was one of the earliest visitors to Slapton Ley and did more than any one to make that lovely sheet of mild water known to the people. In many of his fishing sketches and studies are bits jotted down at the time, or taken from memory from the Ley. He was an excellent and successful pike fisherman and we well remember once going into his studio and finding the floor nearly covered with big pike up to 12 lbs weight which he had taken the day before, or "a cut of the Coln" as he said. He was always rather reticent as to where he got sport. Somehow one has to be in the City or your sport will not last long. The take had been made on a take at Amertham and a great many miles from the Coln proper through the feeder the little which makes the take in question - falls into the Coln near Denham some 12 miles down. But alas! he will never handle rod or hook again. The busy brain is still, the lively fancy quenched, the pleasant dexterous fingers stiff and cold and the bright intelligence gone back to Him who gave it.

"Francis Francis"





Cambrians hasten to the Battle.

From Lyrics of Pen-y-bont.

Cambrians hasten to the battle,  
 Leave your children, and your wives,  
 Cheerful homes, and sheep and cattle,  
 Noblest he who noblest strives.  
 Warriors, patriots, join the fight,  
 Cambria's God assist the right!  
 And let the hills and valleys ring,  
 Owen Glendwr is our King!

Henry's host is fast advancing,  
 Proud their banners wave on high,  
 Down our vale their steeds are prancing,  
 Hear their impious battle cry!  
 Cambrians nerve you for the fight,  
 God defend you in your right!  
 And shout till hills and valleys ring,  
 Owen Glendwr is our King!

Cambrians now, 'tis now or never,  
 If you would as free men live,  
 Strike and free your land for ever,  
 Ask no quarter, and none give,  
 Tell Deva's pure and crystal flood,  
 Be turned into a stream of blood,  
 The hills and valleys loud shall ring,  
 Owen Glendwr is our King!

*Henry David*

PEN-Y-BONT FARM AT CARROG.



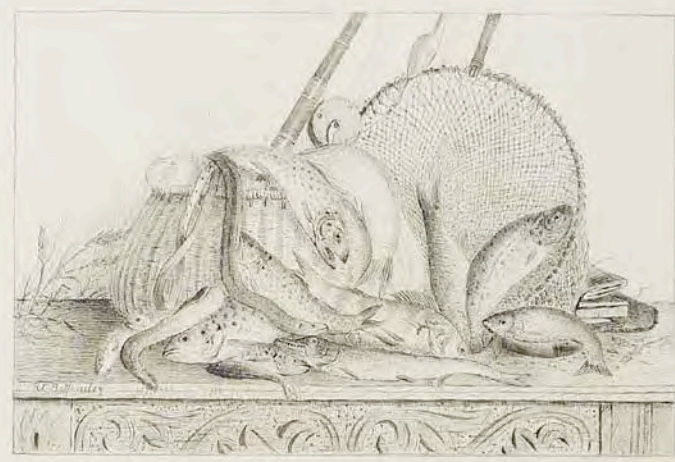
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*Sketched by Colonel Mason*

*Pen y bont*

Chronicles of Penybont

by David Reid.



Illustrations by

R. O. Bottomley.

Our home in the Principality, and fishing quarters, for the year of Grace 1880, was fixed by the side of old classic Dee. A stream, the name of which kindles at once crowds of associations, historical and otherwise. A river perhaps second only to the Thames, in incidents of note and national value. The mind at once reverts from the present, through the lapse of centuries, to those troublous times marking the struggles of the descendants of the ancient Briton, against their conquering foes; before their final subjugation. For in this valley probably, the greatest conflicts took place. The whole vicinity yet rings with the traditions of their heroes, and the yet visible remains of their fortresses and castles testify to the reality of their power and influence. And from these again to the Norman times, when the feudalism of the barons and Knights of Chester influenced this vale; and still further back, the connecting link of Saxon times in the Dee, bearing on its bosom the procession of the Royal Edgar. Then on through the dark interval of Danish disturbances, up to the rule of Imperial Rome; when our river is witness to many of the great influences of that mighty power. The Dee (her name then Deva) from her mouth at Caerboron or Chester to her source it is more than probable Rome had full sway, and along the road so



Pen-y-bent.



many of us shall travel, and on the hills, so many of us shall climb, the legions of Rome tread. Aye, and into a far darker period, when the gloomy rites of the Druids were performed. So may we view from the sides of the Berwyns this valley, and feel the burning thoughts that these identical overlasting hills saw.

"Sage beneath the spreading oak  
Sat the Druid hoary Chief."

while on the river 'neath our feet, the semi-curved Writon in his coracle of wickerwork and hide. So an angler of 1880 may in the pursuit of his art, - seated in his coracle sing in classic verse

"Flow gently, Devo"

casting at the same time his angle in her pellucid waves, and claim brotherhood with the fisherman of Two-thousand years ago x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x

By such a stream, associated, with such memories, our Home stands. The valley, or



## Pen-y-bont.

42

some portions of it, is now known to many of us; 'tis at once grand and most beautiful, a combination of water, wood, and hill, ever changing, ever new. The house - the model of all an Angler could wish, an old fashioned farm interior and exterior, with old fashioned customs and old fashioned ways. Full of enthusiasm and hope our acquaintance was first made, and our eyes first saw, that matchless entrance-hall-vestibule-reception room - and ancient kitchen; for 'tis a mixture of all these seeming anomalies. Need we call attention to that study in black and white, the dark time-worn oaken beams and rafters, set in the white ground of the ceiling, studded all over with memorials of the past - the quaint staircase - the still older black-oak furniture, the easy, settles to that wonderful collection of pewter, and to that fireside, the realization of all that is cosy and comfortable. And here, there, and everywhere, utensils fashioned out of the baser metals, Copper and burnished steel, all bright and beautiful as a knight's armour. See them in the evenings firelight-glow, when tired with toil, the angler enjoys sweet reflection of the day's pleasures, when the yarn is spun that delights, the song that inspires is sung; and the horrible ghastly tale is told, that curdles the blood, makes the hair stand on end, and causes the whole frame to shiver, accompanied by the shrieking howling wind and the tempests roar. Then softly, as with bated breath to be told of the horrid skulls and marrow bones, that lie treasured up in the closet, behind the very chair where you are sitting \* \* \* Then the surroundings of the place, could anything be more satisfactory, and refreshing for us, who live in cramped and crowded cities, with scarcely room to breathe. Here we have a farmstead, with all the delights of a country life at our disposal; for full enjoyment - a bit of everything is the word. Surely, this is a wise arrangement of the Council to provide such sweet incidental music to the play. \* \* \* \* \*

The garden, "a place for sweet reflection" is well worthy of note: 'tis crowded and somewhat rough, but here again is the old world, old fashioned, friends, from the box at your feet, to the yew that keeps watch o'er the gateway; from the green bay tree in the north west corner, to the juniper bush at the opposite diagonal; from the great tea rose to the more precious one at the porch. Note all the gnarled tree roots, in which grow delicate ferns, and all the simples that our grandams culled, growing in quiet humble worth at our feet: talk to our hostess of them, and what a tale she will tell you. This garden is the collection of a life and every living thing there has an interest: an association of love to her; how the yew has grown from a berry, planted fifteen years ago, and its sister tree was transplanted to the churchyard to watch o'er the silent home





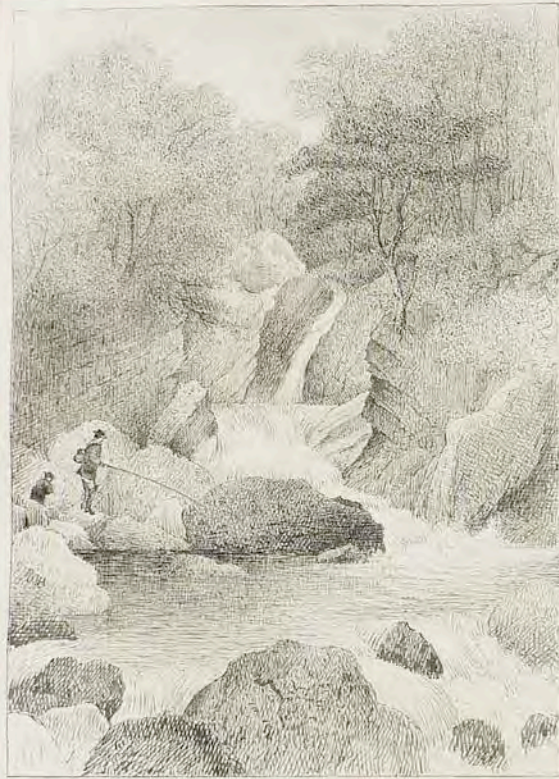


## Pen-y-bont.

The first notable impressions of Pen-y-bont, and neighbourhood, occurred in winter, when all nature was at rest. Frost with its marvellous power of seeming death was o'er everything triumphant, and the sciences reigned. Never will that highly favored three forget that day of days, when they climbed Moel Terna's side, and from its summit viewed that panorama of mountain tops and valleys, when every rill and rivulet was stiffened into ice clear and transparent. Frozen masses and lichens set in glass frozen brooks, mimic waterfalls, rushing and flowing fountains at once arrested in their course as if by magician's art, fairy caverns, grottoes and bridges created where in summer a simple rivulet flows.

The climb up this queen of the Berwyns might be likened to the ascent of a mighty throne buttressed with a number of lesser ones, all white as alabaster, whose steps were formed of a frozen mountain stream, below which might be seen, the carpet of myriads of mosses and plants in all the beauty of their golden and emerald hues. No sound escaped the lips of these travellers. They were speechless—stunbound—and under the influence of the spirit of the Mountain, so they descended in silence and contemplation. x x

x x x x x x x  
 Our opening day! What an inspiring thought! a first spring day of fishing! Is there an angler worthy the name whose heart does not leap responsive to the sound? The pleasures of hope he has been feeding upon for weeks, and the realisation of that hope—his opening day, what a world of utter happiness to him it proves, no matter what the weather, be it cold or raining, be the sport of the poorest kind, the day full of disaster, and accidents happen of the direst kind.





## Pen-y-bont

Does the true angler refine? No rather the contrary, difficulties, disappointments, disasters, all are transmuted into the most precious joys; disasters become adventures, difficulties become the setting to the more priceless picture, his glorious ideal, his queen of delights, his angle. Note him! as that morn he leaves his home, with proud erect frame, trim and tight, his head erect, and with beaming eye, looking upwards, for do not all his feelings, hopes, expectations, partake of that which elevates the mind, therefore the physical frame is responsive to the emotion. Mark his eager steps! and as he views from the crest of the hill, the river at his feet and obtains the first glance at the water, note how the chest heaves, and the nostrils dilate, even as a charger sniffs the conflict from afar, and eager for the fray, note in the very pride of his strength, the graceful waving of the right arm, and supple movement of the wrist, as with a monarch's grace he beats the morning air, for is he not this morn to wave again the favorite wand once more o'er flood and stream. \* \* \* \* So appeared many active and enthusiastic members of the M.A.A. on their day of days in Spring 1880 at Pen-y-bont and none more so, than the well known brother who shall be here named the Pupil, along with wisdom the elder surnamed the Master, and who in spite of his calmness and self control is carried off his feet by the enthusiasm of his younger colleague \* \*







Pen-y-bont.

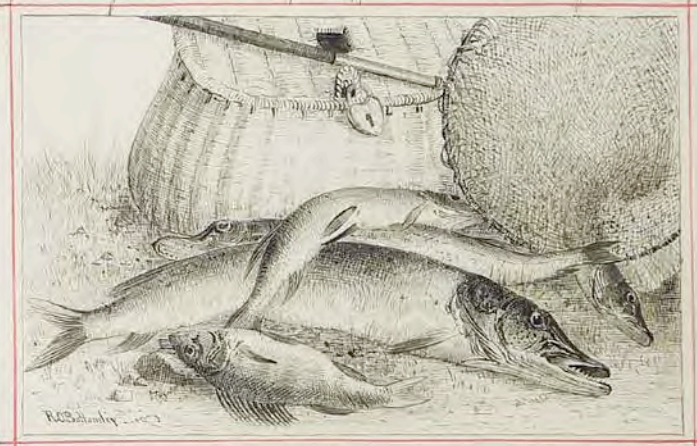
in the hand, the very hard weather, in the pig stye Sir". The pig stye Jones! how what? "Yes Sir 'tis very true look you, they all sleep with the fugs, and you show a candle, thousands will come out, they are very pretty birds Sir, old Parry, of Llangollen, do, he comes here Sir, and catches them Sir - the nice birds - Sir, he birdlines their legs all down Sir, and they sticks Sir, yes Sir, whateffor". "They, does things they do Sir at Llangollen, quite funny Sir, whateffor". "Indeed, what do they do?" "They make nichols Sir, make nichols Jones! how make nichols?" "They do Sir, they make cock sparrows Sir, nichols Sir", "What at two shillings each?" "Oh yes Sir, that is what they do them for Sir, Ah! Ah! Ah! funny Sir", "Very funny - Jones, but tell us however they do it." "Oh they paints them Sir, they rubs their feathers with paint Sir!!! Ah, Jones that will do I see it, are they, Welshmen that do this?" "Oh yes Sir, good joke, there was one Roberts at Corwen he bought one of old Parry and there was M<sup>r</sup> Evan the minister - he asked to see the beautiful bird, and there was Roberts the putcher, and M<sup>r</sup> Williams the Post Office, and M<sup>r</sup> Davis the Magistrate Sir, and oh more several Sir, all birds lovers like them Sir, Well Sir, they had a great meet at his house Sir, They had prizes for the nichols Sir, that was great the others and Roberts put in his bid and it was cock sparrow - Sir, and they chaffs him Sir, they did whateffor, and he said pig words, aha! and they do now say of cock sparrows "Roberts's two shilling nichols, Sir, whateffor" x x x x x x x x



Pen-y-bont.

\* \* \* Of course the first night of meeting, like the first day of angling must be an extra do, and an extra do aid the jolly fellows make, to their hearts content, Provisions ample, were made for the occasion, some had provided citric acid, i.e. lemons and sugar for squashi, others ginger, cowslip and elder wine, not for squashi, and other matters of lesser note were there - - and all went merry as a marriage bell with song and yarn.

"The cobbler tould his queerest stories, The landlord's laugh was ready, chorus?" The brethren all sang the old catch by way of a start, led by the "Draffus" in grandest style - "Mans life is but vain" then some "wise saws by the moralist", then an illustration by the soothsayer, and how hard it is to fig a Welshman in a corner illustrated by a truth as big as Niagara and as far off as the Co. Mayo. Then "We'll all go fishing to day" with full honours, in which he being by this time up to of the cowslip. Then "Shenklemen please you, fugg your pardon cobbler, a cobbler, shenklemen" The cobbler, was rebved about mistake. The English cobbler kinds, the Scotch cobbler with we were all acquainted with - Her, this was a treat indeed.



old Jones joined most heartily patriotic pitch by an infusion I will sent you a sonk to will sing a sonk about a and all welcomed the cobbler, and a cobbler it was, and no with his peculiarities of all his ecclesiastical notions but the ancient British bot. "This cobbler shenklemen, fugg your pardon, was

I must explain shenklemen, a religious man, look you! for thinking for the good of others he was a missionary whatever and he was a member of the propagation society, and he is thinking about the way to be the best, all must join in the chorus and so they did, but for the words read for yourselves, they are written in Welsh, and for the music kind friends apply to the Librarian \* \* \* Now, Dewa, for your song, all get ready for the rousing chorus. Here it is brethren - - and 'twas sung in such a manner as defies description, the result to old Farmer Jones was astonishing.

"Cambrians hasten to the battle" see page 39 \* \* \*

\* \* \* "And now the watching hour was drawing nigh, the fire getting low, the glow of which lit up the chamber



## Pen-y-bont.

round, the aforesaid ornaments, lightly reflecting shadows, uncanny and weird. Our anglers, after the patriotic song, had gradually drawn near the fire and tales of "derring do" - tales of tradition, tales sorrowful, pathetic, sublime tales of wonder, of the superstitions of these places in the past and connected with <sup>the</sup> present, the historian was asked for his contribution to the evening's pleasures, and "it must be truthful, as it is the last" said the President. Two of the party had already popped off, but at the intelligence that the historian was to finish up, and he was to tell the truth, all eyes and ears were ready. "Ah, brethren I am probably better acquainted with the people in this valley, and their doings, than you all, and let me tell you, there is more in their stories of spiritual influences, than at first sight appears. We have been speaking of the unseen sympathies of the physical - den from our sight, but reminds me of a weird poor mortal passed through connected with this very farm-house is built on the bones that not a stone hereabout to you of the fearful past, they have witnessed here, here in this vale is more being who once ruled these parts, whose remains, in so far as they partake of humanity, lie in that fearful mound within sight of the door of this dwelling, whose chambers are watched, (so saith tradition) by beings of the other world, nay, within the reach of Venator there, only hidden from mortal eyes by a thin partition of wood, are kept here, above earth the mortal remains, of the now-elfish spirit of this house, no eyes can look at them, save those of reverence, no hands handle them, save those of the master of this dwelling, and only on certain days and certain hours of the day, can you obtain a sight of those I speak of. With such an introduction, gentlemen, do I now read you the imperfect fragment of the experience of an unfortunate mortal, who evidently has not survived the task. It begins abruptly, - and ends the same, it implies that something evil had been done, and suddenly, breaks









Pen-y-bont.

off as if the writer had succumbed to something dreadful. ~~xx~~ Indeed it was a night to be remembered, the outraged spirits of the mighty dead, that guard this vale, seemed to have risen to defend their trust - The awful mound with its fine clad con-  
 -opre 'neath which the magician sleeps, was full of portentous warning, the hollow skulls and shavelled bones, enshrined  
 in the secret recesses of Pen-y-bontine cloths sympathized with the attendant evil spirits of Glendyr who on that night  
 were most potent for evil. The night wind howled - the mists of evening took shapes weird and fantastic - tall spec-  
 tral forms were seen stalking over Corwen's stoneless bridge that tongues cannot describe, that seen by mortal eyes  
 struck the beholder dumb - mischief was abroad, on the high ways, influences not seen to human kin, played antics  
 to fourfooted beasts known only - who with their instincts in full play, Lorn mortals were found unhorsed by road side  
 and saddles on horses reversed, - by the river side lights were seen floating over Llanellend deep pool, where death and  
 dying struggles have often been witnessed - the silent gliding horrible depths of Va-bach-na-gla, seemed on that  
 night to swoon - gurgle and die away, in gloating - horrible rhythm, as of a terrible disaster to keep time to on that  
 night the cry of "Lost" was heard sounding up the vale far and wide. "Lost!" "Lost!" sounded on Berwyn's rocky  
 sides, "Lost" - "Lost" re-echoed from Bul Coch, "Lost", "Lost" was heard from Peniarth's dark caverns, the owls of  
 Rhaggatt took up the cry, the solitary raven on Terna's wild crags croaked "Lost!" "Lost!" in response. "Lost" and  
 the dwellers in Barrogs mystic close - - - - - Oh stop! stop! Historian, no more! no more! why he is  
 laughing in our very teeth - - ~~There~~ collapse and uproar - in which old Jones - so fearfully overworked in mind  
 is seen making frantic efforts to cling to the staircase, and the lights go out! x x x x x x x x

x x x x x x x x  
 - Chill October - - The Salmon Fishing - The discouragements of Spring were followed by the worse experience of  
 summer for not a sea trout did our anglers catch, and no experience have they to record, they were silent, chewing  
 the cud of their disappointed hope, and then Autumn came. A prominent writer in the premier Fishing jour-  
 -nal, this year, in an October number, says somewhat as follows, "Did ever anglers experience such a time 'tis enough  
 to make one break rods, smash our hats, burn lines, drown our boots, and forswear angling for ever" In such  
 a frame of mind, on a dull miserable October day, did our angler (this time alone) once more find himself at  
 Pen-y-bont, spiritless and cheerless, scarcely hoping for sight of a fish much less a rise, - To angle for salmon,  
 the failure of himself and others had almost extinguished hope, yet he must try, what could be done, but all in  
 vain. His attendant met him at the Station with the cheery news "I haf fished three weeks Sir, and tid never  
 had a rose whatever" From Corwen to Barrog (for salmon fishing esteemed the best in all the river) he fished



## Pen-y-bont.

along with a notable native, one Amos, pronounced here Am'os, who in many of his ways reminded one of a prophet—clad in a queer welsch garb, circumspect, polite, dignified, reverend and without a true fishing companion. They tried at early morning, they waited on through the day, they tried at evening, they tried all the flies possible, then minnows, worm, single hook and fished Stewart, fished at all times, under all circumstances but not a rise or a fish, and after a few days the last hour came, there was nothing remained but smashing one's hat and rod and leaving unfortunately all this come about for almost the last throw, certainly the last pool called the Wharfe Pool, in the teeth of half a gale with a long-long line out, smash, crash, went the old, the dear old wand: it was not the wood—nor the line—Gentlemen—nor the throw—Dethroned, it was simply broken hearted, and so gave in, as for the hat, here it is to speak for itself, entitled Anglers remains a study from Pen-y-bont, and waggish Amos exclaimed, "Fear me Sir, whatever, and you never had a rose!" No not even a rose Amos, but no mistake there have been plenty of roses, and those the wrong way, and at that moment not twelve yards from us a splendid 15 pounder leaped up put his tongue between his cheek, winking one eye seemed to say, "No never a rose whatever ~~xxxx~~ That evening the angler mused and thought of the life—the angling life at Pen-y-bont during 1880 its birth, maturity, old age and death. All the vicissitudes of an angler's life had been experienced there in the fishing home, and as an experiment had opened new delights and aims to the Association, and realized many of them—it had not only drawn anglers together, but found pleasures to families and the family idea has grown, been appreciated and prospered. Pen-y-bont has ministered to some of the sweetest pleasures of life. It has rejoiced at the birth of the young angler and cheered at the entrance of joy into the world of the anglers home, it has softened somewhat the bitterest trials and sorrows that anglers have to bear. While in subdued pleasure we think of those joys, how the sweetest and nearest have walked side by side in these retreats, how on the other hand the dearest and the best have been taken away, how in the midst of angler's joys the father has been summoned to close the eyes of one, who in last accents breathed into the angler's ear, "Father have you brought your rod for there is fishing here" and so passed out into the better Angle Land, and thus in feelings of accord our brother angler saith and the sympathetic spirit of all anglers feels with him.

"Dear vale I come to thee again,  
To see thee in thy autumn dress,  
To bring with me my heart's distress  
In hope thou mayest ease my pain.

x

x

x

"And thou fair river flowing by,  
In which my mirror'd form appears,  
I may not see again for years,  
Or haply never e'er I die!

x

x

x

"Sweet stream thou almost seem'st to me  
A thing of life and full of joy,  
That unlike me hath no sorrow,  
That unlike me can wander free!"

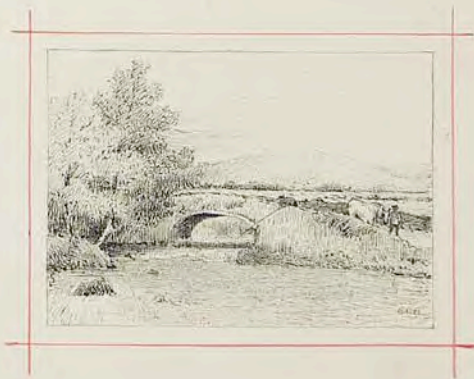
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Pen-y-bont.

x x x x x ^ "What a sight met our gaze on the early morning of our departure! The evening previous was unusually clear, calm, and beautiful, but that morning what a wondrous transformation! that night the first frost had visited the vale, and that wondrous power had again asserted its might, and wreathed the whole visible world to us there in a garment of the purest white, most exquisite and beautiful to behold and inexpressibly lovely, on bower, bush and tree, festoons of the finest lace woven by fairy hands hung in richest folds. The hedges, the road side thistles, the brambles and the numberless so called waifs and weeds of the vegetable world, <sup>were</sup> robed in textures of loveliest forms. Fields in which late crops were still standing, appeared as miniature groves laden with pearls and diamonds. The trees almost all in full foliage, were transformed into shapes of beauty which no words can describe, and on the mountain sides, high up as far as sight could follow, white-robed purity covered everything, and over all silence again reigned, silence at once awe inspiring and yet glorious, animated nature seemed to suspend her very existence, or spoke in most subdued tones, as if in fitting keeping to the majesty whose presence was so manifest. The tiny songsters that had made Pen-y-bont their home, thus their first visit for the winter, perched on chimney, tower and gable, were almost entirely silent save for a soft subdued twitter from a thousand wee throats.





Pen-y-bent.

The rushing, roaring Well, flowed by this morning with a sound as of a curbed, repressed might: thick, congealed, slow and slushy. The sparkling merry rivulet whose singing has charmed so many of us as it flows by our window, glides under the same influence with sounds of the softest, sweetest pianissimo and all this reigned only for a few short hours, till the rays of the rising sun dispelled the vision; but what followed? The raid had been made, the mischief done, death and decay followed immediately afterwards, before the noon of that memorable day, thousands nay millions of the varied foliage of that valley lay on the ground. No glowing, burning, Autumn tints will there be for eyes to gaze upon this season of 1885. And so we leave our last peep of our Welsh home, precisely under similar conditions as the first we saw it when winter reigned supreme, when spring unfolded her treasures, when summer glowed upon all things when Autumn poured her riches forth, and now while robed winter again tells all nature to rest, but for a short space only, until the primroses again bloom and the birds sing - can so will we rest and in the hope of once again enjoying the delights and pleasures by Derw's side.

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The Mores of Shropshire

By George Davies.

Illustrations by

J. W. Townsend.

..... This district within which are these seven mores is to my mind very lovely, it does not possess the bold scenery of Scotland, of Wales, or the Cumberland lake district, but

has a quiet beauty, an unobtrusive loveliness that is very charming, either in Spring when Nature like a blushing maiden first begins to put on bridal garments, or Summer in mature beauty dressed in



# Meres of Shropshire.

all her glory and magnificence, or Autumn  
with overflowing lakes, and with plenty  
covered, or white-looked Winters,

"When the post has wrought a silence".

.....  
Eldonmore lake is open to the public, and visitors staying at the Bridgegate Hotel will find no difficulty in obtaining permission to fish in either Whitmore, or Colbourne, or all of which there are good and safe boats.



..... The town is of Saxon origin, supposed by some to derive its name from *ald-mora*, i.e. the greatest mere, being the largest lake in this part of the County; while others believe, it derives its name from the large quantity of eels it contained. I am disposed to think the Saxon ~~origin~~ derivation the most probable, as all the other lakes are well stocked with eels.

..... I have fished this mere on many occasions with varying results. Some years ago I went for an early bath, taking my rod with me. Near the boathouse was an immense number of dace playing on the surface of the water; they would not break worms, but paste they devoured greedily, in fact the bait was no sooner on the water than it was taken, and

I kept pulling fish out until I was fairly tired. They were put into a slatted basket belonging to a poor woman (who gladly received them) and looked more like a quantity of herrings than anything else. I did not count them, but I should say, there were upwards of one hundred and fifty, weighing from six to twelve ounces.

..... Fishing on this lake (Colbourne) seven years since on a bright November day, I killed fifteen jack, varying in weight from ten to four pounds.

..... The last time I fished here (Whitmore) was on a rough winter's day a few years since, I killed five jack, averaging about five pounds weight, and were all taken with the spoonbait.

..... By a cross cut along a narrow lane Colbourne can be reached, and you enter a wood of firs, through which you walk along the whole length of the lake. This mere is long and somewhat narrow. It is as I have observed bounded on one side by a wood of fir trees, and on the other side a belt of tall reeds runs the whole length of the lake; at the top end of which it broadens out into a considerable and impenetrable tract of the tallest and strongest reeds I have ever seen. Here is the home and breeding place of numerous swiftpool, and here too in the summer time is to be found the curiously constructed nest of the reed-wren, which is made by binding together three or four reeds with coarse grasses some



## Mere of Shropshire.

distance above the  
rest. The  
nest is slight  
but strongly  
made, is very  
deep, and  
contracted  
at the top,  
so that however  
much the wind  
may roll, or  
be shaken into  
the water, the eggs, or young have a secure  
home, and are in no danger of falling out.



..... Mr L joined them in friendly  
chat for half an hour, when the "treacher  
learned that here, as ~~to~~ everywhere, "shadow  
and shade is life, flower and thorn", for it  
came out in conversation that this worthy  
host was a father of seven children, but  
the children were no more, they had all  
fallen victims to a malignant fever.

The strong man was bowed down with  
the recollection of his irreparable loss, and  
the eyes of each were moistened with tears.  
"One touch of nature has made them all kin."  
"Ye two engines went to their last quiet + subject."



..... This man who was not sufficiently  
well clad to withstand the cold, and who was  
likewise nearly wet through with the spray that  
had dashed into, and over the boat, now began  
to complain, and to see his own broad shoulders,  
said, "it was nashua's fault", and that he was  
"honestest starved to gold", so he was sent home  
to change his clothes, Haddie and Sago determining  
to remain afloat (unless the boat sunk), until the  
trip arrived to take them to their hotel. There  
had been all day long a biting north-west  
wind, and the waves had made the punt  
dance about in quite a lively manner, making  
it hard work to row, but hardly had they  
reached the further side of the lake after putting  
them down on shore when a perfect hurricane  
set in, against which their united efforts  
were quite unavailing, so letting the boat  
partly drift into a somewhat sheltered place  
they moved her to some fishing station there  
to await the termination or moderation of  
the gale. The wind swept down on the  
lake with such fury that its whole surface  
was covered with turbulent waves crested with  
foam; it roared through the branches of  
the giant oaks that skirted the shore, it  
moaned among the sombre firs on the hill  
top, while it almost shrieked as it rushed  
through the dead reeds, snapping them asunder  
and hurling them aloft as though they might  
have been shot from some deadly gun, while  
amidst the tumult was occasionally heard the  
crash of some large rotten branch as it was  
hurled to the ground. After a time the wind

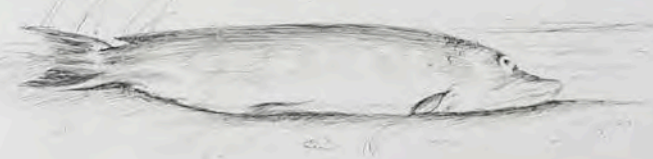


# Meres of Shropshire.

began to abate and the sky across which the clouds had been flying with incredible swiftness grew darker, and darker. Gage suggested the propriety of getting back to the lathouse, but Hackle like an old salt preferred to remain. They were not long kept in suspense as to the meaning of the strange darkness that had come upon them so rapidly for they were almost immediately enveloped in a blinding snow-storm.



The point soon began to wear quite an artistic appearance, while the two friends sat quiet as stones, silent, as the silent footfalls of the flying snow. What strange vagaries it seemed to play, sometimes driven in wavy horizontal lines, then rising perpendicularly, until broken by the wind, and falling in graceful lines like spray from some tall fountain; or again rushing like a torrent till cast precipitately downward like a cascade and then was lost for ever.



"Most certainly, by fishing in the sport for well-being," replied Gage, "for the salmon is to my mind the royal fish of our rivers, as far exalted above all the denizens of our streams as our gracious lady the Queen is above all her subjects. And next to the salmon I would place the trout, a member of the highest class of social society, amply in shape, beautiful in coloring, painful in motion, wary yet sensitive, she get bold, a strategist in war, brave in battle, noble in death."



"Will dear Gage! what would you say of the grayling?"

"I should liken him to an aristocratic judge with quite as much consequence about him as his noble 'mistress'."

"Now I will ask respecting pike?"

"The pike is the ancient Schmeckel of our ponds, lakes, and rivers; the modern demagogue, whose function is to destroy, not to preserve; strong, cruel, rapacious, and a pronounced home ruler."

"May I ask what fish are the doctors?"

"There are none, for being all test-tubers no doctors are needed."

"O indeed! are any like herons?"

"No, the sensible creature they keep all the plums for themselves, and consequently have none to give away."

"You are surely some like langoues?"

"Not any; what nothing is done they do among themselves, which is not very professional, but saves trouble and expense."

# Analysis.

Charles Estcourt. F.C.S.

## The Ribble and the Bollin Grains per gallon

Constituents of Waters	The Ribble at Horton	The Bollin 100 yds above the Bardon sewer	The Bollin 100 yds below the Bardon sewer
Chlorine (as Chloride of Sodium)	0.9940	1.8450	2.2360
Nitrogen (as Nitrates)	0.0000	0.0612	0.9300
Ammonia	0.0008	0.0011	0.0002
Urea			
Albuminoid	0.0032	0.0140	0.0154
Oxygen absorbed in 4 hours	0.0400	0.0176	0.0175
Total Solid Matter	9.84	21.14	18.34
Mineral do	4.96	13.90	11.76
Loss on ignition	4.88	7.24	6.58
Hardness	8.04	14.40	14.60
do after boiling	6.07		
Appearance	color light coffee, clear	yellow tint, turbid	yellow tint, turbid

The Ribble springs from the peaty moorlands at the highest point of Ribblesdale near Newby Head just below Hold Fell which is 1829 feet above the sea level. Within a few miles three other good fishing rivers take their rise. The Wharfedale goes which runs in an easterly direction the Eden which goes north, and the Aire and the Don which which beyond Doncaster do become the Aire running a short stream through Lancaster.

The sample the particulars of analysis of which are given above was taken from the Ribble at Horton in Ribblesdale on a fine cold day in September 18



# Analysis.

The samples from the River Dollen were obtained on Saturday 17 Sept 18  
 An interesting feature in connection with these analyses is the fact that one, the  
 Rettle represents the new fishing water, of our Association, while the other also  
 represents the fishing grounds of an influential fishing and fish breeding Association.  
 No better contrast could be presented showing the difference between pollution and non-  
 pollution than is found in the subjects of the foregoing analyses.

The one swarms with trout, no breeding or stocking being required; the other ~~water~~  
 after stocking with thousands of fry for some years back containing many poor sized fish  
 but each one of them is only another proof of the law of the survival of the fittest,  
 since of the thousands annually turned into the Dollen by the association comparatively  
 few survive.

Thus in a polluted river such as the Dollen, the constituents which  
 during the infancy of the fry prove the destruction of the majority, tend to the  
 few that survive at maturity give the strong food necessary, a great increase  
 in size.

Many examples of this might be given of which the Thames affords a  
 striking one. Small fish are rarely caught in that river, and the  
 largest and best fed ones are found near the place where the sewage  
 runs on. It is indeed ever true that "life is one of the results of that we  
 call decay" and it is almost possible that with a proper choice of decaying  
 matter (wastes to mankind) we might feed the speckled beauties up even to  
 the requirements of Peter Pindar who says in his Ballad to a fish in  
 the Brook.

Carry thy stream, oh harmless fish,  
 And when an angler for his dish,  
 Through gluttony, vile sin,  
 Attempts - vile wretch - to pull thee out,  
 God give thee strength, oh gentle trout,  
 To pull the rascal in.

J. S. Scott.



## A TOUR IN ROSS.

J. Henderson.

Preparatory to giving a summary of my tour in Ross it is necessary I should state that the rivers were comparatively waterless and the Lochs -- bright as a looking glass. Having no brother Angler with me, of course I had no inducement to put my rod together, and can therefore only give what information I could pick up from the natives, respecting the angling capabilities of the district.

We were a party of six at the Central Station on Wednesday evening the 16<sup>th</sup> of August and took the six p.m. train for Liverpool, went on board the Owl, and sailed for Greenock about nine o'clock, arriving there at one p.m. on Thursday. About seven we embarked on board the Clansman steamer for the Hebrides and the west coast. Our route is by Arran, round the Mull of Tintyre to Oban, which place we reach at eight o'clock on Friday morning. Much cargo having



to be taken in and discharged we have a short time on shore. -- Every accommodation that a traveller needs can be obtained at a many good hotels and this is evidently a rising and fashionable sea-side resort. There were a number of yachts in the bay, some of them of apparently 500 tons. The two largest belonging to Mr Ashbury and Sir Coats of Paisley.



Leaving Oban we soon arrive at the beautiful scenery on the Sound of Mull, discharge cargo at Loch Aline and Salen and have two hours on shore at Tobermory - Our course from here is round Ardnamurchan point, up Sleat Sound to Glenelg - Day light declines as we proceed through the narrows at Kyle Rhea into Loch Alsh. At Balmacara a large raft of timber was pushed overboard for a boat which met us to tow to land. It is now quite dark and after passing the light house at Kyle Aken retire to our berths. During the night our boat does business at Broadford and Portree in Skye, leaving the latter place at early morning. As we passed through Raasay Sound the sea was quite alive with what the Scotch call Lythe synonymous with Pollack. On entering the Mench, really the Atlantic Ocean, a whale swam for a considerable <sup>distance</sup> under the bow of the vessel, showing itself well when it came to the surface to breathe. It appeared about ten feet long and of a light slate colour - We had previously seen one at the mouth of the Clyde and I think they must have been Dolphins.

Our destination was the next stopping place - Ullapool on Loch Broom in Ross-shire. Here is a good Hotel, some stores and two or three establishments for curing herrings. We had a days fishing in the Loch, caught about twenty, the largest a Codling of three pounds and saw two seals sporting close by - The scenery in every direction is grand. A mail car runs daily to Garra Station on the Dingwall and Skye Railway. There are three rivers. The Duddonell which runs into little Loch Broom let with the shootings, the Braem also let and the Ullapool river at present with the moor in the hands of the Hotel - The banks of the last river for a mile up are very precipitous and rocky, but afterwards there are some nice reaches of water - It runs out of Loch Auchall which is strictly preserved, and contains both Salmon and Trout Twelve miles on the road to Garra is Braemore, the residence of Mr. Fowler C.E. The river Broom here runs through narrow and very deep rifts in the rock and being close to the high road, with paths to the most striking views, can be seen without any loss of time, a great advantage when travelling. In one place the water falls perpendicularly two hundred and fifty feet. Immediately over is a light suspension bridge affording a fine view.



## Ross.

Going forward another twelve miles we arrive at Allquish a lonely Inn on the Blackwater. This river contains Salmon and Trout. The water above the Inn looked good with nice grassy banks and deep pools. Below for miles it is all rock and big boulders among which I saw an angler poking his way. There is accommodation to be had in the house and I think a few days could be very pleasantly spent here. It is in the midst of a deer forest and during our drive we saw a large herd of them. We continue our journey down the river to Garvie a distance of twelve miles, and here take the train to Achnasheen passing Loch Luichart and Achanault.



The landlady at Achnasheen said the trout in the latter Loch reach three and four pounds and that she had two boats for the use of her visitors. The fish were small in these waters but plentiful. There is a respectable looking Inn adjoining Achanault Station. A glorious moon shone as we drove by Loch Rosque to Kinlochewe. The road passes through Dockety pass which is so steep and precipitous on one side that for the future I should prefer walking it. The river Garvie is close to the Hotel, running into Loch Maree. It contains both Salmon and Trout.



The following morning we walked along the side of Loch Maree ten miles to the Talladale Hotel, occupied a year or two ago by Her Majesty. On the opposite side of the Loch rises Ben Bleach to the height of 3216 feet with no smaller peaks intervening and although I saw other Bens 4000 feet high, this to me was the Big Ben. Next day we retraced our steps to Achnashiear and took tickets for the terminus of the railway at Inverness on Loch Carron, passing several small lochs, I believe, but with the shootings on the way. There is a good Hotel here and our carriage previously ordered was in attendance to convey us to Balmacara Hotel on Lochalsh.



This is a charming resting place. Every accommodation requisite, good cooking and a hard working landlord. Our first excursion from here was a walk of four miles to Dorney ferry to Dorney ferry on Loch Duich and then a boat eight miles to the head of the Loch. Here is the house Inn a noted place for Salmon fishers. The charge is five shillings per day. I saw four idle rods at the door and in the kitchen about ten trout of half to three quarters of a pound each.

Ross.

Another day we drove to Duncraig and after hiring a boat for the day crossed Loch Carron to land my friends for a walking excursion. It being a most sultry day I prepared sea fishing - I was supplied with an enormous fly made of scarlet and yellow woolled - with a mallard wing. The line was of the usual coarse sea kind, but during the run of twelve miles to the place of rendezvous I caught five hylke of two to three pounds each. I have a strong impression our Society could make great reforms in sea fishing.

After five days sojourn at Palomacasa, we left by steamer for Oban and for the first time had rain and a stormy wind. We found Oban, I believe as usual at this season of the year, awkward as to sleeping accommodation, but finding ourselves alive the next morning took the boat for the Crinan Canal. Arriving there we found the thirteen locks on it all dry and had to walk three miles to the little steamer Kenneth to take us forward. Cars, as I think is always the case carrying the luggage.

Arriving at Ardrishaig we went on board the Columba, the finest passenger steamer in Great Britain, having day accommodation for 1000 persons. In fact it is a floating first class hotel, and runs daily in the season from Glasgow to Ardrishaig and back. The upper deck is a level promenade of 316 feet, below a magnificent saloon and lower still a fine dining room, where you may have anything you order at your own time. Our route is now through the Kyle of Bute by Dunoon and Inveraray to Glasgow.

I am unable to write a description of the scenery we passed through but finer I should say is not in Scotland. Beds are the bug bear! This need not frighten the ladies, I mean we had to take our night's rest, unless arranged beforehand, how we could - We slept or tried, on the floor, often on sofas and chairs, in a school house and once I was one of two in a bed at the Banter - The exceptionally dry and sunny <sup>weather</sup> probably accounts for the great influx of visitors.

M. Menderdine.  
1880.

Regarding the scenery, I would I were a Bard, (Shakespeare) and then I could describe all the glowing colours of our rise and sunset, but being only an Angler my descriptions would be very fishy.



## Anglers Evenings.

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In the successful publishing of "Our own" and in the reception it has met with by the world of angling literature, what an amount of congratulation may we not offer each other - and without vanity, we may well be proud of this our "first born". Was ever such unanimous "vote of confidence" given to a book? Not a single unfavorable criticism from anywhere, but on the contrary welcome and encouragement; all the more valuable to us for we shrink not from the test, but courted the most severe of critics. No better reward could we wish than in the words of the Saturday Review, "Good wishes and plenty of more such papers to be read" in the winter of our discontent.

A few of us will look back, and think for a moment or two at the prospect which we placed before us only a short three and a half years ago. The enthusiasm and vigour that founded the association; its aims and aspirations; the work, the anxiety, the determination to make our association felt, and the

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## Anglers Evenings.

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And the ultimate end of our labours, the attainment of more than we ever thought of - Not only of status to give us a position, but to quote again our ~~reviewers~~ <sup>reviewers</sup> ~~by~~ those of the first angling paper of the Kingdom - "The Manchester Anglers are far and away the premier Angling Society of England. No other even approaches it, and in a very few years it will be a mark of distinction to belong to it"

We are now on the point of beginning our second volume, and so we may well be anxious. Shall we hold our own? it is to be hoped so, but we shall do well to take heed and remember what has raised our association to its present proud position: - and what only will keep it in the same

There is a danger, and it is possible the danger may be near. Brethren of the Manchester Anglers Association. Shall we retain our present honourable position ~~by~~ that of intellectual work and activity, our high idealism - our power to influence others? The answer lies with you.

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Letters to the Editor.

40 Broom St  
25th Feb 1881

Dear Recd

This day you into 4 have received  
informing me you would be pleased  
to have a capture of my name  
to put it in your magazine  
I am much sorry for to say  
that I have nothing to relate  
do nothing that is worth a pen  
don't even your where to put it in  
But if this time you me forgive  
I'll promise you if I do have  
to go to another fishing match  
I'll let you have a long long letter

Y all once the bees adorn the trees  
and flowers in honey feed the bees  
and honey feeds the bees  
all then I am just your I - O Curio  
Excuse me and do forgive me this  
time

that Criminal and  
Association that inflames  
your imagination -

However its something  
to see your handwriting.

N.B. you will find I  
so persuasive for a trait  
as a large dock grab and  
a great green & white fish -  
flies be bothered -

Yours truly  
N

Herewith I clean you my  
modest effort.

All I could say if it is that the  
misfortune I have met with in  
its passage through life are terrible  
to think of.

But I had a lot of melted wax  
from a candle ~~was~~ spilled on it.

Then about 2 a pint of Indian ink  
was hastily distributed on the left hand  
April, and interminable secretary  
has failed to remove the signs -

Again as I brought down in the train  
I sat upon it and though it has  
been damped - pressed it will  
never be itally again. Yours truly  
M

Im First  
Trenchard

March 2

Mr Reid

Herewith a small

book for the mag -  
please use it in the  
right hand - It has been  
more trouble to me than  
I ever could have found  
possible as I often  
know what I mean

## One way to the Tweed.

Abel Heywood Jan 2

If one could only get onto the North Train at Victoria Station at 1.15 a.m. and sleep for six hours, how delicious would be the awakening! To be, a little after midnight, in endless, monotonous, wearisome streets, and at breakfast time to find oneself, after an unconscious journey, at Beattock the nearest station to Moffat, one of the sweetest little towns in her Majesty's dominions. In other journeys on this way, barring the sleep, and though six hours in a stuffed backed railway carriage, rolling, tossing and writhing in ineffectual effort to go to sleep, are not conducive to anything but bad temper at the time, and dull stupidity for the following day, a few mouthfuls of the pure Moffat air will make you forget your fretful & restless night, and drooping eyes will never remind you, even as night comes on again that you have been 48 hours without rest.

To attempt to describe your sensations, as you emerge from the Station & climb on the bus, must result in miserable failure, one can only write sentimental rubbish which no one ought to write, and no one would read. It is a good long time since I was at school, but as far as I remember, the feeling I have been speaking of, is nearest to that of a schoolboy, home for the holidays, who has just caught sight of the dear old walls that shelter mother & sisters. I am afraid that the dear old hills would under circumstances such as I am writing about, appear to me dearer than 1 schoolboy's home, or than Kith & Kin. Here I not past skipping & jumping I should dance, but it is only my heart now that can indulge in such antics, and may it never fail in its joyful performances, in the presence of Springdale and this loved mountain scenery.

As the bus rolls on its way, how delightful is every remembered object that comes in view. The square black inn with its pillared porch under which you have more than once sat, in the warm summer days, the old square Scottish tower, and the Roman way that runs by it, but no trace of which you have ever been able to find; every rise & fall of the road, every tree, every changeable outline of the hills, all there as they were, just as if you had not been away for ever so many years. Now you cross the straight little river, and see the blue smoke of your own town waiking at the foot of the dark wooded hill beyond, now you enter the Street, pass the "black bull" and under the shade of the great elm trees that front the old church, then you turn sharp round into the market place around which the town is gathered, the bus stops, you are immediately in the hospitable embrace of the "Ruecleugh Arms" (this is not meant for a pun) and after a course in the bed room, come down to breakfast "as fresh as paint" and your holiday has begun.

What a charm there is in revisiting a spot you have come to know & love. How minute as you find your memory to be, as you gaze out of window and recognise, almost with smile & nod as though they were old acquaintances, the bricks & mortar, which in the main seem to be exactly as you left them. How ready is your eye to notice the town improvements, - disfigurements as they seem to you - for how could the old place be better than as you first knew it, when it consisted of little more than the one great Street or square of whitewashed houses, and one or two off-shoots where the few detached lodging houses were



## One way to the Tweed

located? A clean, delightful, simple little town was Moffat twenty years ago, the place Edwyn Haugh might have had in his mind when he wrote

"Is what care I for cities grand -  
We never shall agree;  
I'd rather live where the laycock sings,  
A country heave for me!  
A country heave, where one son meet  
The friends & neighbours known,  
Than one can lounge in the market place -  
Or see the meadows mown."

The extensions and improvements have no charm for you. But it cannot be denied, the march of events will not spare even Moffat, and with this trace of sadness in your joy, you sit down to breakfast.

As you have a good day's work before you, you lose no unnecessary time over the meal, but set off in good time, crossing the square, and taking the best trodden road out of the town, - the road to the Well. Moffat is famed for its well; people come from all parts of the country to drink its waters, and as it is the custom of the veterans to walk if they are able, the mile & a half up the hill to the moors, and after drinking, to walk back again, and all this before breakfast we may be very sure that many people find their feeble digestions and weary unused joints, vastly improved by Moffat Well.

It is a good broad macadamised road all the way to this shrine, and when you come to the bridge crossing a little stream, you are not far from it. This streamlet which joins the Well burn by the side of which we have walked a good part of the way, runs at the bottom of a pretty little dell, which in

iron palisade, now substituted for the former stone parapet of the bridge, gives you an excellent opportunity to look down into. There it runs, in deep shadow, some thirty feet or so below you, between banks richly clad in fern & fougère, and embraced by boughs which hang lovingly over. I have caught one or two trout which have been a good deal larger than the place would lead you to expect in the, but I fancy that few people would waste their time in fishing there now, or perhaps the place is unchanged and it is I who have altered, and grown older and less hopeful than I was.

Very soon after passing the Well, the road terminates, not abruptly, like a railway line which ends in a pair of buffers, but gradually tapering off into a scorch cart track, which seems to commit suicide by running into the burn, then we see it no more. We have no path to follow now, we are really and truly in the wilderness, not a trace of a human habitation, or of man's work is in sight, we are closed in by the mighty hills on every side, our only companions the sheep on the heaths, the grouse, the curlews and the "waiting plovers."

The first part of what we have set ourselves to do, we can now see before us, and it is evident the sooner we begin our climb, the easier it will be, so leaving the stream on our right, we commence the ascent of the hill which buttresses the higher on at the head of our valley, flooding steadily on, through bracken, heather, and occasionally fern, until these cease, and a short grass only remains. Now we come to a patch of green spongy turf, in the midst of which a spring gushes up, and after staking our thrust, urge upwards again, and after a struggle, during which now heer, now squalls, now Grabschick has begged his companions to turn round and admire



## One way to the Tweed.

63

the prospect, we reach the summit. All the world is now beneath us, we are higher than most of the hills. From this side their rounded forms slope gradually downwards, reminding us of our juvenile impressions of an elephant's back, on the other side they are steeper, more craggy, and deeper in colour. Away in the west are the high hills at whose feet Moffat Water flows, and far beyond, almost lost in the haze, the Solway is gleaming in the sun.

A glance at the map shows us that we have but a short way to go before we shall come in sight of another valley, which we shall have to skirt for some distance, - and steering by the compass we thread our way at the bottom of deep trenches in the peat, which seems to crown the top of all the hills hereabout. Our new valley is that of the Blackshope, a stream of that name running along it. Coming in sight of this valley suddenly as we do, the prospect strikes us dumb with awe & amazement. We are on the verge of a precipice so steep that the first inclination is to stand back, lest one's head should reel. To our right the high bare rocks are if possible bolder than where we stand, to the left rises Hart Fell's summit, in a smooth glassy mound. Suddenly on the Black-shope side. The mountains opposite, on the other side of the hollow are bleak & rugged, without a tree and almost destitute of verdure. There seems, from where we stand, to be no outlet for the stream, the rocks apparently close the valley, and we have a huge black basin 3 miles long, 2 wide & 1500 feet deep. A wilder & more fearful place, even Dore never imagined.

The spot we stand upon, part of the Swatte Fell, is 2388 feet high, to the right the rocks are within a few feet of the same height; to the left, closing the valley, are Hart Fell 2651 & Hartfell Rigg 2422; turning

round on the other side is Raven Crag 2246, then right opposite Pricot Crag 2215, & Saddle Yoke 2412.

I do not know how often I have clambered up to see this place, I think about 15, and if I am ever near enough to Moffat again, and have strength to do it, I shall see it once more. It is perhaps not singular to say, for it always is so, that probably not a dozen people in Moffat have taken the trouble to see this Blackshope Hollow, and very few visitors either see or hear of it.

The stream at the foot of these mighty hills is a famous one for trout of small size, but as we are on our way to the Tweed, we will not venture to waste the couple of hours or so that it would take to get down to the water & back again.

As we ascend the last slope of the Hart Fell, we encounter a strong & piercingly cold wind which seems to have been gathered in the basin beneath, and to be forcing its bitter way by pressure from below. With hands numbed & half frozen, we have to hold our hats as we go, and more than once lie down on the slope to recover the breath that has been blown out of our bodies. Flying from this & taking the lee of the hill, we come in full view of another valley, draining into the Ovan, which from where we stand seems most surely to run up hill instead of down. Then we descend to Raven Crag & Rotten Bottom, and in doing this get a sight across still another valley (that of the Freid) & of a little lake we wish to pass by, on our way. The Freid flows into the Tweed, and is the first tributary of any size; the lake is Gameshore Loch, to reach which we have to descend a short distance or make a long detour. Before we commence this, let us



## One way to the Tweed.

Take another look at the hill-tops we are in the midst of. We are now at the head of the Blackshope valley, and looking down it have Saddleyoke on our left, the sharp ridge of which we plainly see. This is said to be narrow enough for a man to shaddle across & each side is so steep that a stone may be rolled down for half a mile.

The next valley to Blackshope is Carrifran, narrower than the former, but scarcely less rugged; beyond it we see Green Coomb, the highest peak in the district, and were we to go in that direction, after passing by it we should come upon the coldest of all wild lochs, Loch Skeene. Well might this district be chosen by the persecuted Covenanters as an unassailable refuge! Well might Claverhouse who set his horse to mount one of these steep, in a chase after a hare, gain the reputation of having come home and all, from the infernal regions!

But we are not going to Loch Skeene, let us then turn our steps towards the Jameshope. Soon we find ourselves going splash, splash, at every step. It is almost a bog all the way to the loch, and quite a bog when we get there. The loch is very small, scarcely more than a pond. Its waters are as black as the Sny, and the side of the lake is so boggy, that it is unsafe to walk round it, & except at the narrow end, where the bottom is stony, very unsafe to wade. There are any quantity of Trout, as black as the water they inhabit, in the loch, and in the summer they are said to be always ready. The small stream which issues from the lake gathers size very quickly, and we follow its course till it falls into the Tweed.

We are now at the head of another valley, deep & dark, with great bold hills towering up on each side. The stream is a famous one for Burn Trout, still

of dark colour & occasionally as black as coal. The fall of the burn is very rapid, and the holes for a wonder leave nothing to be desired. After following the stream for a mile or two, we come in sight of a house, and dogs are already barking at & furling towards us. The shepherd has not met strange faces here for many a day, and is glad to see us, while his wife in answer to our hungry application, readily supplies us with bannocks, butter & milk.

Neither food, nor rest are by any means unpleasant, and we are in no great hurry to leave guide wife and her house full of bairns.

Peter declares when we set off again, that the milk has upset him, but seeing that he has swallowed at least 2 quarts, we cannot see how that can be. Crabstick and Squills know all about it, they have observed poor Peters distress, know how completely he is knocked up, and that proud of his endurance, he is anxious to take refuge in the innocent milk-bowl. "It's no use Peter you'll have to come on," and come on he does, never even going to look at Talla Lynfoot, the beautiful fall not more than 100 yards from the back of the cottage. "We can see it well enough from here" says Peter, and to tell the truth so said the others, for had they not seen it before? were their legs not weary, their feet sore, & their boots stopping wet?

From the Linn, the way is broad, grassy and level, and often running by the side of the stream, now widened into a little river called the Talla. This is the largest of Tweed's tributaries for a good many miles, and all excellent trout stream at all times. The track after four or five miles, crosses the stone bridge over the Tweed, and here our travellers you may be sure, lean over the parapet, and peer into the depths of



## One way to the Tweed.

64

the pool. We are at the Tweed now, and have gained our object; we have found one way to the Tweed, and that a glorious & magnificent one.

But if we have reached the river, we are not yet at our resting place. There is a little village here, Shield, with a red Church in it, and I almost think it is the model village in which I think there is no Public House, it is so quiet & sweet looking. The Church is in the shadow of a tall dark hill, nestling in its lap. It is one of those out-of-the-way little places where you may be sure the hunted Covenanters would bring their dead to be buried. If you would find the stones that it was the devoted task of "Old Mortality" to tend, it is in such places as this, away from the bustle of the world, that you must seek them. Here, still fondly preserved, is the grave of John Hunter, with a headstone bearing inscriptions which the Rev. Jno. Dick, in answer to my application, has been kind enough to copy for me - On the front side of the stone -

"Here lies John Hunter Martyr who was cruelly murdered at Corrhead by Col James Douglas and his party, for his adherence to the word of God & Scotland's covenanted work of Reformation 1685."

Erected in the year 1726.

"When Zion's King was robbed of his right  
His witnesses in Scotland put to flight  
When popish Prelats & Indulgence  
Combined gainst Christ to ruine Presbytere  
All who would not unto their idol bow  
The socht them out & whom they found they slaw  
For owning of Christ's cause I then did die.  
My blood for vengeance on His enemies did cry."

Our road is now a broad, firm Macadam and half an hour's walk brings us to our resting place, the Brook Inn. The house stands apart from all other dwellings, almost the solitary occupant of the vale. This is the place for "sweet retirement"; no railways, no telegraphs, hardly a post-man: 800 feet above the sea, stern, rugged, cold; the purest of all fresh breezes blowing over the hills, a comfortable house, simple fare, a bath fed direct from the mountain stream, and last of all the dainty waters of the Tweed, running at the foot of the meadow, free to your rod either up or down, as far as you wish to fish it.

The trout are not generally large, but there is a fair sprinkling of halibounders in your basket at night, and one or two larger, culminating in one of a pound; but monsters of 3 or 4 lbs are caught occasionally, by those who know how to do it, and where to find them.

Right opposite the door of the Inn, a couple of hundred yards away, there is a series of delightful pools, which to this day are known by certain Manchester anglers as the Doctors Pools. A heathen - whence is this Doctor, chiddlike & bland. During the tramp over Hart Fell he imparted to the innocent Peter his ignorance of matters piscatorial, and begged the latter to take him in hand and instruct him in the gentle art. Who so ready to hear as Peter? On the morrow he inducted Squills before Grateshick knew what he was about, to these lovely pools, and leaving him there for a few minutes returned for his own rod. When he rejoined the innocent one Squills meekly remarked he had taken three trout, one of these half a pound weight. Then poor Peter knew himself sold. I don't know what to make of Squills' he



## One way to the Tweed.

remarked to Crabstick on joining him, "he said he wanted me to show him how to fish, and before I could say Jack Robinson he had three trout in his creel." "Something wrong that's clear" and wrong it was, for Squills had got possession of the best and handiest pools in the river, and would not stir.

Every morning when the arrangements for the day were talked over, "I don't care to go away," he said, "I'll leave it to you two to find out the best places, and the guileless pair fell into the trap, only discovering I do not know how long after, how they had been gulled. To be sure they tried to tempt Squills up the stream & down the stream, but he was soon home again loitering about his pools till he got possession, and then he sloshed there. Crabstick would go down & fish up, Peter up & fish down, in the hope of getting a throw over the Doctor's preserve, but Squills was always there when they arrived, always ready with a bland smile to give them good speed up or down, but not to vacate.

On one of the first days Squills vowed he raised a monster, certainly a four pounder. There was no mistake about it, the fish just gave one roll, revealing himself in the sun for one moment, took away the whole cast, the rod flew up, and the trout was seen no more. "I'm determined to have that fellow," Squills said, and for him he made out that he loitered about his pools from day to day, getting the while, as much fish as his deluded companions, who whipped miles of water, up and down.

Unhappily, this excursion ended, as they all must. The three friends found sport, health and pleasure at The Crook. The return was made by the high road, a route which is only less beautiful than the one already spoken of. It starts an-

other huge hollow in the hills, known as The Devil's Reef into a description of which may be found in Sir Walter Scott's Red Gauntlet, the only one of the Waverley Novels in which this singularly grand scenery at the head of the Tweed is described.

