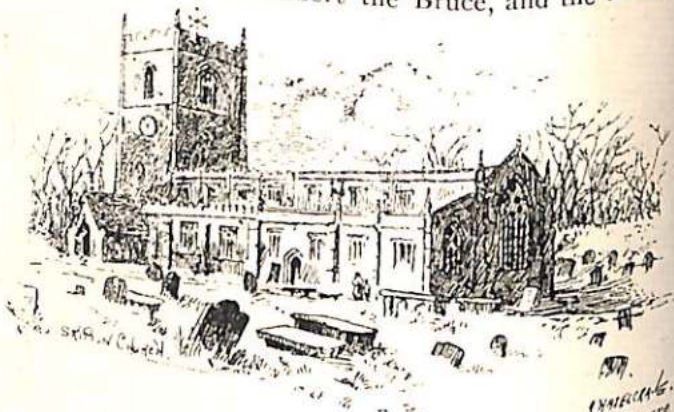


## THE CHARMED LAND OF CRAVEN.

Craven men who had dared to resist the invader were left weltering in their very life's blood. Twice and even thrice the Scots swept like a whirlwind across Yorkshire, each time leaving ruin in their track. Bolton Priory was ransacked, and the Priors like hunted hares fled for the nonce to other places, some to the strong walled Castle of Skipton, against which the assaults of the Borderers were of small avail. These were years of great suffering to the "tall folk," the like of which they never since experienced.

This raiding of the Scots was in no wise a mere rabble of numbers, but a compact body of lightly armed horsemen, led by men whose names will last as long as history will survive, such names as Robert the Bruce, and the two great



SKIPTON CHURCH.

A. Haselgrave.

leaders Randolph and the Black Douglas—and for generations later the women folk of Craven were wont to hush their children to the words:

"Hush ye, hush ye, little pet, ye,  
Black Douglas will not get ye."

We have now reached the inn bearing the sign of the "Craven Heifer." The celebrated Craven Prize Heifer, (from whence so many inn signs originated), was bred by a dalesman during the early part of the last century. Onward we tramp through a pleasantly diversified land of lime pasture with the grit crags of Flasby, on our left, seen from

here in outline like a miniature Snowdon, inhaling the aromatic air off the heather-clad heights of Barden Moor. Away to our right is the rocky rampart of Embsay fell, and further that of Crookrise, fir-clad and sombre.

Waterford Gill, and the grey gaunt eerie tower of the Nortons give a striking effect to this reach of upland. To our left peak-like rises Sharpow Hill, and the contours of the Flasby Range lend interest and glamour to the rich sunsets seen from here.

Now we are passing the house bearing the singular name of "None Go By." The origin of this name we cannot say. Story tells, that once on a time here was an inn, and over the door Boniface inscribed:

"Let none go by without a call,  
To taste my beer, both strong and small."

That is one side of the story, but we must look further back for the probable origin of this name. Away down the centuries, when the rule of the Skipton Lords was nearly absolute in Craven, a manorial law of the Cliffords ordained that—"every bryde cummyng that waye shude eyther gyve her left shoo, or three shillings and fourpence to the forester of Crookrise by waye of custome or gayte-cloys,"—which was surely one of the most uncouth exactions ever heard of. The origin of the custom was probably in the old Servile tax of Merchet, a barbarous custom from the days when might was right, to avoid which, the husband or outraged father would have paid the fine many times over, even glad enough that he might do so. One Thomas Walker was the last forester to watch over the customs, etc., of the old Chace of Crookrise. He died at a good old age towards the middle of last century. On still nights the sound of the old forest horn could be heard from Crookrise to Barden Tower.

For those who seek, Fairy Kist will be found near Waterford Gill. Hereabouts the fairies held revels, and burnt weed in their wee pipes! Anyhow, quite a number of little pipes were found in this Kist, and even yet, in the gloaming of a summer's night, peradventure, we may catch the faint sound of elfin

## THE CHARMED LAND OF CRAVEN.

bells as the fairies circle the green sward in merry dance. Fairies loves solitude and always sequester away far from the footsteps of men. The building of the New Hospital here will, therefore, mark a general exodus of fairies from this solitary region. Yonder from the dark scowling fell Waterford Gill comes leaping in sporting cascades to the green valley separating the two Chases of Skipton and Rylstone. A little to the west



NORTON TOWERS.

(J. Craven)

standing gaunt, ragged and ghostlike above a deep ravine and resting on the brink of a commanding plateau, is Norton Tower, keeping alive the memory of the hapless Norton.

Now past Scale House (a stately mansion, although its origin was only a shepherd's shelter), and over the south-west butress of the Fells and thence, down hill into the picturesque village of storied Rylstone, a restful spot away from the madding crowd. Here, by the village lanes, the lanes, beautifully tree shaded, radiate; moss-tinted

creamy white walls, antique porches and mullioned windows; charm, though all the land is charmed, whilst to the left the Church Tower appears through a veil of verdure; such, with a few cottages and one or two superior dwellings, is all one finds at Rylstone. It is enough, this old world village, so snugly nestled in the lap of the fells, and half-hidden in frondage is undescribly charming, and is bound up with a family whose history, interwoven with romance, is more strange than fiction. Even the motto, inscribed on the bells at Rylstone "God is All," has long



EMILY NORTON AND THE WHITE DOE

been a puzzle for antiquarians to wrangle over. Rylstone came to the Nortons by the marriage of John Norton with the heiress of the Radcliffes.

Space forbids us dwelling upon the story of the ill-fated Nortons, or of the sainted Emily and her pet Doe\* To the

\* See the Author's "One Thousand Miles in Wharfedale."

south and around the east end of the Church, foundations of the old Manor Hall still remain, and close by the foot-path leading to Cracoe are the vestiges of what was once the "Vivary," i.e., Fishpond and Garden. And hereabouts the snowdrops still bloom, a further memorial of the doomed family; the fragment of the old Peel Tower is also further evidence. The wild sweep of Barden Fell, the haunt of curlew and plover still retains its pristine condition, though Rylstone now boasts a railway station! It is situated about a mile from the village about equi-distant between Rylstone, Cracoe, and Hetton. The latter village is pleasantly situated on a commanding plateau with fine views over the fells. The annual feast was formerly called "Rush Bearing," but the old custom has become obsolete. Fine views can be obtained from the vicinity of the station, the wild reach of moorland above Malhamdale around the source of the Aire, and the curtain wall-like outline of Rylstone Fell; on the other hand, to the north, the vision is bounded by high range of moorland, and hoary wrinkled head of Wharfedale (partly hidden in a shroud of mist), separating Wharfedale from Netherdale. Within this scene lie scattered the grey homes of the fell folk; flower-*prank'd* pastures, grassy swells and retired dells, over which cloud shadows sweep, with here and there a brooklet fringed with marsh marigolds, wimpling onward giving charm and simplicity to the scene. A field path (Chapel Lane) leads past the Church (a short cut) to Cracoe.

The village of Cracoe (meaning, the Hill of the Crag) is a pleasant spot in summer time, with its old grey walls, antique porches and stone mullions. On the east rises the steep jagged wall of rock that fringes the lonesome fells, on the brink of which stands, sentinel-like, a Cross, the shaft of Millstone Grit. Story says it was erected to commemorate the Peace of Paris, 1816. The cross-piece, which is of wood, was added later. There are two inns at Cracoe, "The Black Bull" and "The Devonshire."

Leaving Cracoe. We follow the high-road to where it turns sharply to the left. Yonder in the valley are the limestone quarries of Swinden. Commercial activity usually spoils landscape, and this instance is no exception to the

rule, though we are pleased to state, however, that the Dales Railway if we except its terminus at Grassington, has not materially altered the beauty of the landscape. A few paces beyond Swinden, the road forks into two, one way leads to Threshfield, the other to Linton and Grassington. Here, at the junction of the roads is an inn so situated that no thirsty traveller can pass without a call. "Catch-all Inn" is the sign it bears, unique, like the one formerly at "None Go By."



RYLSTONE CHURCH.

From "Catch-All Inn," 20 minutes of sharp walking through undulating hillocky land, the barrier knolls thrown up by convulsed nature, which contorted the limestone rocks with a crumpling up-thrust, and made what is known as the Craven anticlinal, one may reach Threshfield, or that most lovely of villages, Linton-in-Craven. Its description we leave to a later page.

A quarter mile from Linton, down the steep hill road, and we fall into the valley of the Wharfe at Linton Mill. Here, we bear left over the bridge crossing the merry Linton

and Threshfield becks, and follow the twining road, attractions for the eye of the farer on every hand; the "stain" of moss and lichen on every mortarless wall stain the grey old Craven homesteads, Tudor mullioned, that kept their beauty and dignity intact through the rush times, when even by-lanes are invaded by hooting car motor lurry. Now we are on the bank of that most charming of Yorkshire rivers, the silver, limpid Wharfe. No other spot in her long course from the fells of Cambores here, are the windings more wholly brimful of meaning and charm, her ripples, more cryptic and subtle in intention than they are viewed from this bridge, which seems to induce us at one wide gaze to the very crystal soul of her loveliness.

Five more minutes' walk up the twining silver-glen hill-road the old cobbled market square of Grassington reached.

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## CHAPTER II.

### THE RAIL ROUTE TO GRASSINGTON.

Re-starting at Skipton we, this time, go up-dale by the single-line Branch Railway, which, most present-day visitors prefer, to avoid the exertion of a long walk. It has many advantages; the route is interesting seen from either carriage window, leading through moory or Birds'-een primrose tures, flanked by wilder fell slopes and frowning scarp. From Skipton the train, after burrowing through Skipton Rock tunnel, clatters over "Sandy Beck." Here a few years back a tremendous thunder flood washed out the embankment and stopped both road and rail traffic for some time. From the junction of the line with that running to Bolton, a half-circle is made with Embsay Crag to the right, and to the left and behind the fine array of fells, Castle woods, down below is the sinuous flashing of the jewelled Ellerbeck. Further away, due west now

proceed at no express pace are the verdureries of Cragside and over them the fine contour lines of Sharpshaw (pronounced Sharpah), and the Flasby fells, and should it be in the hour before gloaming when the tourist approaches the charmed land, sunsets of amazing glory are to be seen; in hue from scarlet and vermilion yellow to golden fringed purple of such soul stirring and yet flamboyant beauty enough to awaken and attune to a rapture of feeling the "rusty" heartstrings of a city-pent person, quite unexperienced before!

The train passes now over what was till lately a tract of virgin forest-land, thicketed in parts, strong and rushlight studded wet slack in others, with the remnants of ancient though drawf and decrepit oaks, here and there. To the left yonder, in the Craven-gate gap is the site of the old "Bar" House, the former "None Go By" hostel. To the right sombrely massed and awesome, is upreared, an earth wave of Titanic proportion, the forest fell scarp of Embsay, and that rock-arras overhanging like a curtain Nettleshaw Wood. At the north-west verge of this wood the Cliffords had a hunting or watch tower, and further just across the fairy-haunted Waterford Gill dividing line, stands what is left, gaunt and bare, the relics of Norton's Towers, already mentioned. The train now steams through the depression between Flasby Fell and Scale House, to Rylstone, so "taking" to one's fancy for its sweet pastoral charm of environage; here and there through the trees the old Craven homesteads glinting back to us from roof or gable where the sun strikes them, their hints of cosy comfort and peace. Under their eaves the visitant swallows love to nest; and cloud shadows touch softly yet linger not, rising from among the trees may be discerned the battlements of Rylstone Church, with the long, broken, and dinted line of Rylstone Fell beyond. Left on the gentle rise westwards, set in picturesque groups among the scattered timber, lies the village of Hetton. Eastwards after Cracoe is passed opens out a number of round green limestone knolls, which continue chain-like diagonally across the dale east by south from Cracoe to Appletreewick. Passing close past the "Catch All Inn," and the lime-delph, carved out of a great greenknoll, the terminus is reached, at a plateau

lying high and dry as it were a terrace on the brink of a new and charmingly diversified world, guarded north and west by dimly outlined wild-looking, and lonely hill-ridges



## CHAPTER III.

## BURNSALL, BARDEN, APPLEIREWICK AND HEBDEN.

It is 8 miles by the direct road from Skipton to Burnsall. Leaving for Barden the road at 2 miles out passes through the large village of Embsay. The great limestone quarries at Haw Bank, tunnelled through at their west end



BARDEN TOWERS.

the Dales Railway, are worthy of inspection: their grand marble-like faces are stupendous. Nearer the process "workings" the older disused bays and gorges have been clothed by never-resting Nature with a profuse vegetation of over fifty different sorts of flowers from Grass of Parnassus

and Felwort to Birds' Eye Primrose, and curious Orchids, finding a "foot of earth" in this natural garden, on the authority of Rothery, a late Skipton botanist.

Embsay was the seat of the original Augustinian Priory, founded by Wm. de Meschines, being afterwards removed to more secluded Bolton. From the moor summit here a wonderful scene spreads out before the eye, well worth the climb to view it.

Two ancient footpaths, though now seldom used, cross Barden Moor from Embsay; one leads to "the hidden, sleepy hamlet" Thorpe, and is difficult to trace; the other crosses the moor to Burnsall. Both furnish wild and solitary walks, through miles on miles of heather and ling, crowberry and cowberry; and yet from their spacious breadth and bracing-air character they amply repay and compensate the effort involved. On reaching the Burnsall Fell's brink a vision of almost unsurpassed loveliness bursts on the sight. The river Wharfe, like a silver ribbon set loopingly in the emerald pastures of the lowest level, Burnsall village, like a dream picture, nestles in the chequered lap of the vale; green and argent is the note struck whatever the season, in summer-time the heavens match the earth in silver cumulus cloud, pillowed upon blue sky.

Passing easterly over Halton Moor (1,170 feet), we arrive at Barden Tower, and look down upon the ever-flowing Wharfe, and the fine sylvan forest scenery billowing about Barden. As a picture of the past, eloquent of antiquity and an ideal in its student inmate of which history tells the tale, Barden Tower, gaunt, ragged and sombre now, is unique. But space forbids elaborating the theme here. Note its chapel, its farmhouse adjoined, and the wild waves of moorland swells all about it; a home and a sanctuary, apart from life's "fitful fever," yet of its very heart, yearly resurrected in living green.

Barden Tower was the preferred residing place of Henry Clifford, a studious scholar, better known, however, as the "Shepherd Lord." He not only beautified the place, but kept up a noble establishment consonant to his high rank.

From Barden the tourist may take either bank of the river—the path on the left leads to Burnsall, 3½ miles; but

crossing the bridge, noting its fine setting in an everywhere lovely ensemble, we follow the east bank or road to Appletre-



TROLLERS GILL

wick; on either hand we mark the peculiarly vivid green of the pastoral parts in strong contrast to the belts of dark pine and fir woods above. An old track, little used, branches away to the right across the moors and the north-west flank or haunch of Simon Seat to Pateley Bridge. From the "Seat" one of the most magnificent prospects is obtainable. Now we are at Haugh

Wood, where Haugh Gill beck sprints and leaps into the Wharfe. From Haugh Wood another path trends through the pastures by the riverside to Woodhouse.

Skyreholm and Percival Hall are situate in Haugh or How Gill, and further still "Trowlers" (or as some say, Troll) Gill runs an eerie or uncanny course half underground at times in its crevasse-like deep and narrow gorge. It is



THE WHARFE NEAR APPLETREWICK.

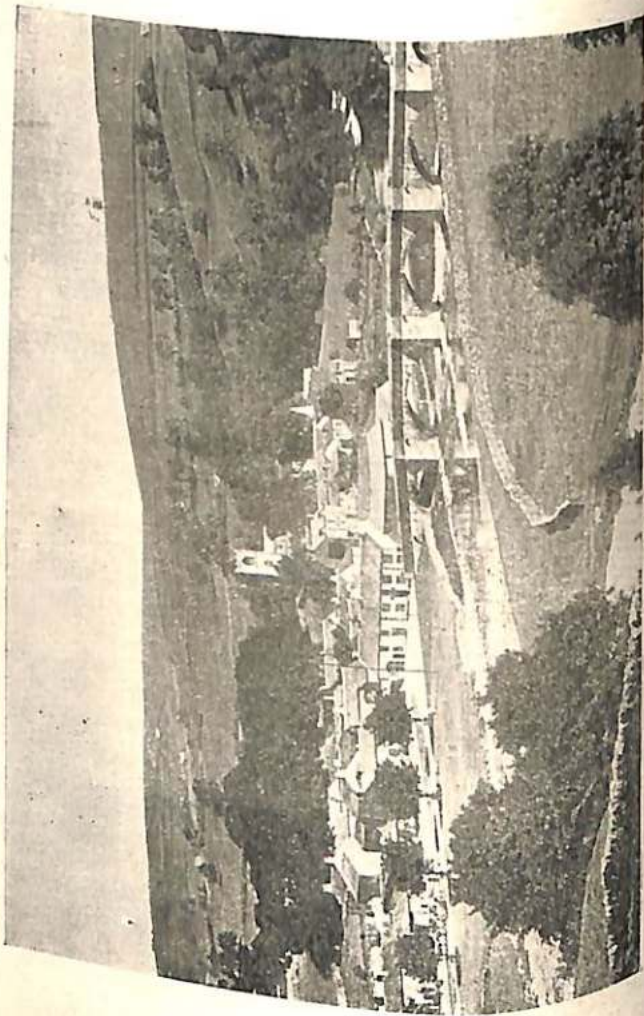
[Edmund Begg.

a lonesome place, a former haunt of the "Barguest" or "Mauthe Doog," things shaggy, wolfish, and of diabolic aspect—or so the whispered legend says. This beck, like Hell Gill in Lunds, and Grange Gill in Abbotside, runs through a deep and narrow wynd in which "Hell Hole" or "Troller's Cave" is located. A short distance above and beyond the summit of the Gill, which has a steep gradient here, are the famed Stump Cross Caverns, honeycombing



the potholed lime-rock, and rich in those stone icicles (formed out of the drip-dripp of lime saturated water) called stalactites. Near to is the Pateley high road, leading over Greenhow hill and village (said to be the highest in Yorkshire), into Nether or Nidder-Dale.

Turning west, the track along the road which leads to the Devil's Brig, to Hebden, and finally Grassington—"the Appian Way" of Wharfedale, along which that man of many journeyings, John Wesley, travelled from Grassington to Pateley, to preach. Hereabout, formerly, the Devil is said to have been very busy, and many versions of his sable majesty's doings are extant, all, one supposes, equally veracious. The way now declines perceptibly into the "basin" of the river Dibb—which means Dip, and Grimwith, with its reservoir of water for the big town far away, lie hidden from us higher up in the lap of the wild, dark-soiled peat moors. Returning to the junction of the road we left, we drop down, to Appletrewick, a small village bestriding the road two miles above Burnsall. Its name is compound, revealing the commingling there of two races, Celt and Norseman. This uphill place of a twisting street contains many antique features. In its old Craven dwellings, all built of native stone, many of 16th and 17th Centuries' date, are two inns, the "Craven Arms" and the "New Inn." In bygone days, a great fair was held in the pastures between Appletrewick and the Wharfe, the place is still known as "Sheeper Hills." This village was also the "home-land" of the Earls of Craven. Part of the Hall that housed the old yeoman family is still there; built by the Cravens, it bears cut in stone the initials of Thomas Craven, and also W. Craven, dated 1665. The interior shows a Minstrels' Gallery and other interesting features, and is placed on a commanding site at the top of the village, a large elm (?) or perhaps a sycamore uprears its massy form by the entrance gate. Around this spot grew up the Appletrewick settlement of a remote time. Here was the "Tryst," "Moot," or Meet for several centuries of the dalesman for gossip or business. A pleasant walk of two miles by road, or along the river-bank, brings us to Burnsall. On our right rises the huge rounded mount of



C. G. B. H. H. H.

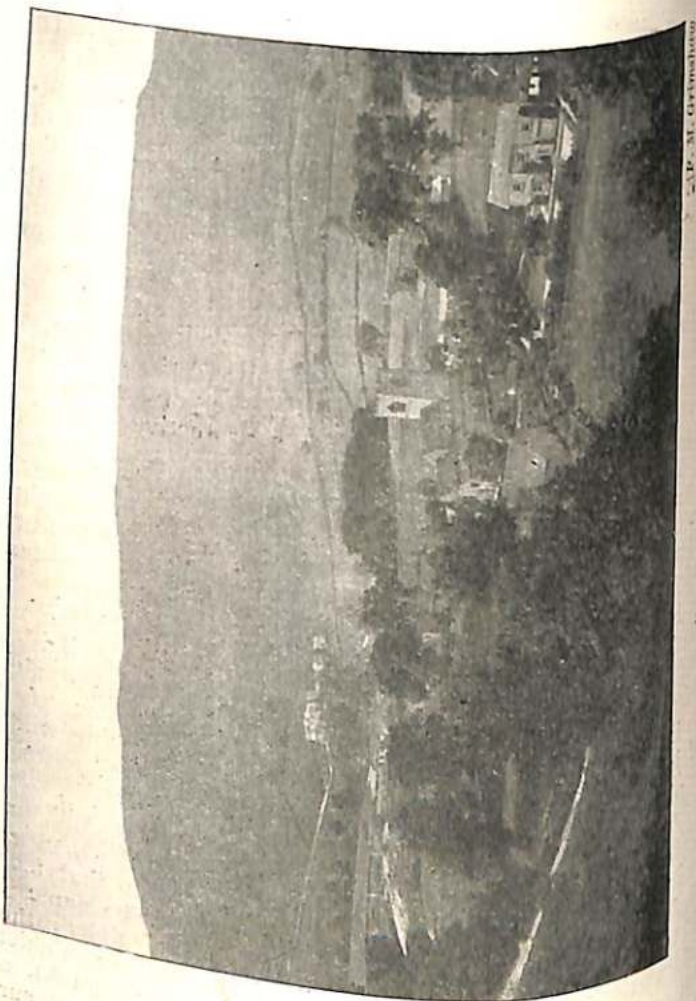
BURNSALL FROM THE DIBB

Appletrewick Kale—the largest of those green-turf'd limestone hills left after that great volcanic upheaval of the earth's strata which we have mentioned as beginning near Cracoe, proof of which may be seen in quarry delphs from Draughton in the waved and zig-zag rock layers. This chain of emerald knolls have been called "barrier reefs" by the geologist. They commence with Greenhow hill, and marking the fracture-line of the "Craven Fault" show up obliquely set across Wharfedale to Elbolton and Stebdene, near Cracoe; but the eastern limit of the Craven fault only ceases at Harrogate, where it was the cause and factor of that Spa's sulphur-water, etc., to which its fame is due.

To our left, as we make for Burnsall, prettily situated on the Dibb's bank, is the ancient hamlet of Woodhouse, the home for 300 years of that well-kenn'd yeoman family of Bland. The Manor House is distinctive of the Stuart period, stained and tinted by Time's protective enamel of lichen and moss. A pasture-length away formerly stood a large "Laithe," a yeoman's dwelling in the 16th century of a man named Waters, who rescued a daughter of a Clifford from the clutches of some ruffians in the pastures of Appletrewick: "J. W." (the initials of John Waters) "1635" was lately still to be seen on the laithe.

Hartlington, set on the hither bank of the Dibb stream, is only a short distance away. Its foundation is British, despite its name being distinctly Anglian; many points linking the place with a remote past have been unearthed. The little "Dibb" is a mountain stream, here leaping wildly and joyously in sportive cascades, from the brown moors to the placid Wharfe.

Above the bridge are the ruins of an old saw-mill, and all the way up the glen to the Devil's bridge the prospect is wild and rugged. A short mile brings one to that most delightfully picturesque village of Burnsall. The name is said to denote the "Hall by the Burn," but one thinks rather that it derives from some patronymic Bjorn or Bearn, a chief-tain, and sall, his residence, as in Upsall (near Thirsk), or Upsala in Sweden. Charmingly placed, in the cup of surrounding hills, with the scent from beflowered limestone turf and balsamic fir wood, the moorland kissing its very



—A. M. GUTHRIE

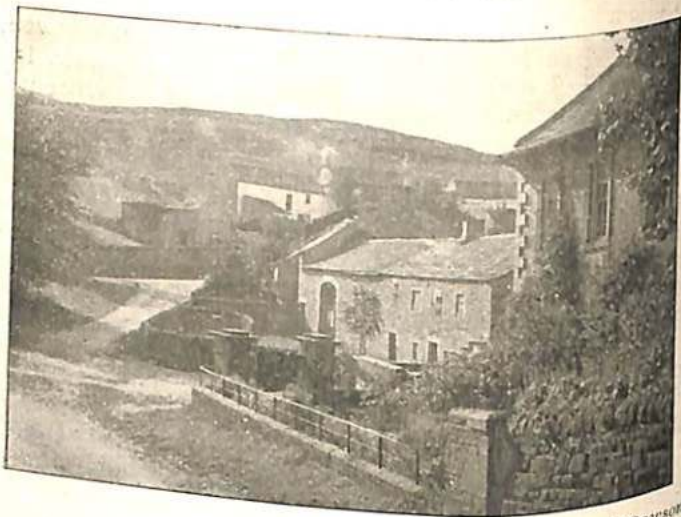
WATERLOO PHOTOGRAPHIC WORKS, MANCHESTER

porches, Burnsall stands without a rival, most idyllic of Wharfedale's village settlements. Apart from one or two uncompromising factory-like domestic buildings of modern date, tho' even these cannot mar the setting in such a beautiful frame of this Craven-land village. The older houses, without exception, have thick, solid walls and stout mullions of grey local stone, yet bearing evidence of that individuality wherein the spirit of the past survives. Here a fine bridge, erected in 1884, spans the Wharfe, replacing one destroyed by the great flood of 1883; but there was a bridge at Burnsall as early as 1260. And here, too, is a spacious green with a Maypole, the half curve the river takes here, like a serpent's coil, circling round it and ever musically gliding past. The Red Lion Hotel, mullioned windowed, a typical hostel of an olden time none too common now, looks out on to the green and the breezy heights of the fell cutting the skyline. Here one has all that configuration and scenic arrangement which combine to render the place instinct with the amenities of existence, imbued with an air of old-worldism and repose. To the historian and antiquary the interest centres of course round the Church and Grammar School. Access to the churchyard is through an ancient lych-gate, bearing the impress of having served its purpose for many and many a generation. The Church (of Saint Wilfrid) is an old structure, restored by Sir Wm. Craven about 1612. During the latest restoration in 1858 several relics were unearthed, parts of very early pre-Norman crosses, and a very fine piece of ancient sculpture. All visitors should carefully note the fine example of an early Norman font on which is carved a representation of a Sea-Horse, and other symbols of mythologic ideas, which suggest something earlier even than Norman date.

The Grammar School, founded by Sir Wm. Craven in 1602, is a delightful architectural feature. He was a London Alderman, 3rd. son of Wm. Craven and Beatrice Hunter and came of substantial yeomanic stock, long settled at Appletrewick. The old school has stone mullioned windows, leaded lights, ornamental spandrels, and a Jacobean porch. In 1611 Craven became Lord Mayor of

London; William, his eldest son—as gallant a knight as ever drew sword—is supposed to have secretly married the Princess Elizabeth, daughter of James the 1st, and the widow of the King of Bohemia. The rise of this Craven family from humble state to that of wealth and influence, companion of Kings and Queens, is quite as romantic in career as that of Dick Whittington.

Old sports and pastimes, and almost now desuete customs were kept up at this place to within a few years ago; but the aged men of the old yeoman type which the writer knew and hob-a-nobb'd with a generation back are fast dis-



T. DATESON

THORPE.

appearing; a notable example was J. H. Bland, the Wharfedale "poet," known to all who made any stay in the place. He has passed from the place he so well loved, "the bonny green banks of" Wharfe, his *Samaria*, as the hymn-song has it. Bland was in his 90th year when he died, and with him passed many picture-details of Wharfedale in the early Victorian days.

One seems loth to leave this place, and again dwell a moment on the combined charm and grandeur of its surroundings—and the spell it holds over the heart. Turn whichever way one may, everything the eye rests upon has its suggestion and message of the beautiful to the mind.

A mile and a half, by field path or road, and the hamlet of Thorp-sub-montem (under the hill) can be reached. It lies deep in the hollow of clustering hills, huddled away and



E. M. GRIMSHAW

THE WHARFE NEAR HEDDEN.

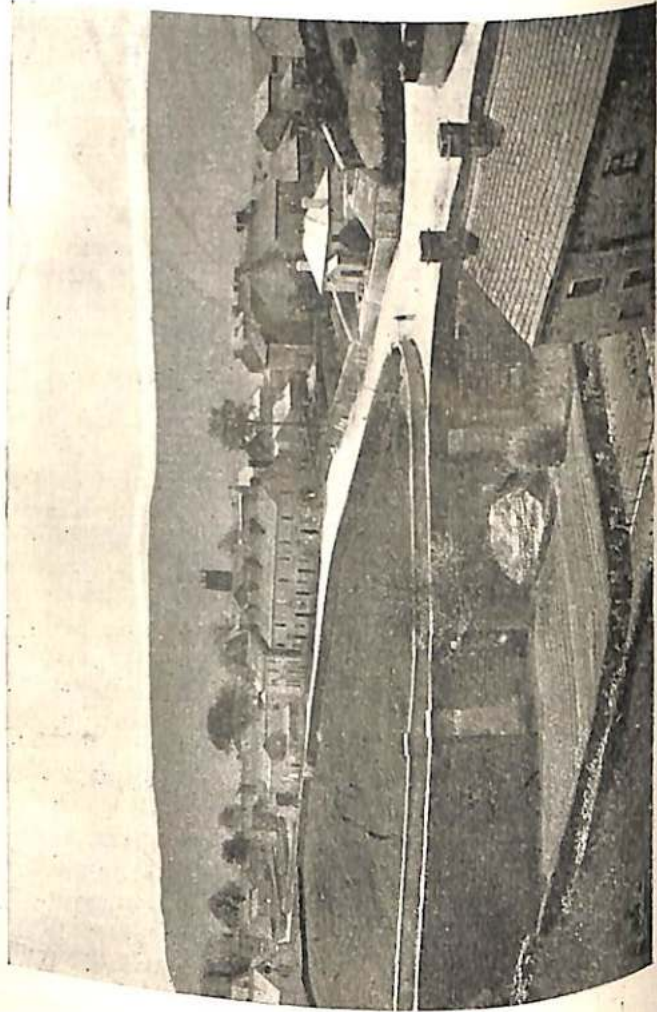
peacefully sleepy-hollowed; it is as it was centuries ago. Of old that "wee" myth race the fairies dwelt hereabout—so tradition avers: then it became the Cobbler's town, and many are the tales told concerning the knights of St. Crispin, but like the pixies (only more certainly) these men of "sole" and "upper" have taken their awl with them, every one, and flown. This unique retreat of Thorpe saved it from rapine and ruin more than once during the raids of the wild marauding Scots. Judging by present day vestiges and evidential

footprints of men, the unwritten history of Thorpe goes far back into the dim and shadowy prehistoric. Away up yonder on the huge curving slope of Elbolton is Knave Knoll Cave, which through the zeal of the Rev. E. Jones, yielded a remarkable collection of wild animal and even human remains; whilst on the opposite side of the hill Mr. D. Hodgson only lately unearthed an ancient British burial of the Flint Age! Thorpe is hemmed in on the S. and S.W. by Thorpe fell; by Elbolton W., and Thorpe Knowle to the E. It comprises 6 or 7 very substantially built houses, mullion partitioned lights and curious stone lintels; some are ruinous and fallen, others have been converted into "cauf hulls" and shippons.

Harking back to \*Burnsall, we take the bank of the Wharfe through a stretch of truly sylvan ground to the "Hippings"—the stepping stones and the swing bridge spanning the river near Hebden. On our way we pass the two Wells, St. Margaret's and St. Helen's, which served to keep alive the old superstitions clinging about the ancient well worship as a visible fount of life and luck for so long. Here the river, during ages not to be reckoned up, has carved its channel through a huge "reef" of limestone, one of the lesser knolls before-mentioned, but showing that the river is later in time than the upthrown barrier. The Wharfe lashes and rushes through the narrows and over the displaced boulders strewn about in chaotic picturesqueness. This place is associated also with the murder of Dr. Petty, and the hiding of his body by Tom Lee. A little below is St. Wilfrid's Scar, the scenery on this stretch of the stream from the bridge to Loup Scar is both beautiful, romantic, and varied, ringing the changes with the water's voice for appropriate accompaniment from the soft and sylvan tumultuous, where the waters rush in thunderous diapason through the confined space between precipitous limerock walls.

Crossing the swing bridge we follow the path to the village of Hebden, which stands on the high shelf or terrace above the ravine. The name suggests its situation—*heb*, high or up, and *den*, dene—the Up-dene, or the High-dene. This mountain village is finely situated, over-

\* Errata.—On page 18 the distance from Skipton to Burnsall is given as 8 miles, it should read 10 miles.



Grainshaw

Hebden Bridge

looking the deep dene or gorge adown which leaps and plunges the water, from the peat and lead-mined moors separating the Wharfe watershed from that of Netherdale. In spite the imprisoned flood fairly howls down to the Wharfe.



IN THE HEBDEN GILL, BURNSALL FELL IN THE BACKGROUND.

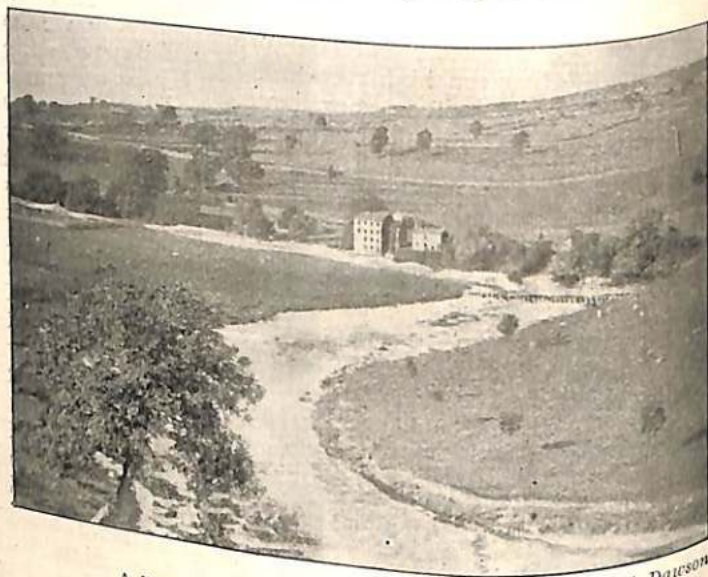
After 1066 this Manor passed from one Dringle (a Saxon) to Osbern-de-Arches, from whom it went to the Hebdens—a family who took their name from this place, holding the manor for many generations, but every fragment of their home, an old fortified manor-hall, set on the E. side of Thorsgill, has perished. Well worship was not obsolete in Craven at the end of the 17th century. Here was a

notable well, Thruskell or Thor's Well, still accounted "haunted"—impregnated, rather—by its special water symbolism. Here people assembled to worship, and partake of the water, as communicants, to-day, do of wine.

Standing at the foot of the ravine by the old mill, the village on its brink and the background make a pleasant landscape picture. Mounting the old-world street, where-through wafts the wine-like air of the high moors, untainted by any factory fume, we note bizarre and unusual and antique bits of domestic "architecture," and now we are where the Grassington high-road crosses the gill by a high substantial bridge: built in 1827 it replaced a shaky one set lower down in the bed of the ravine. High up a very pretty cascade falls over the lip of terraced rock, and just beyond this, in a hollow by the road, is Hole Bottom farm, the home of eid of the Bowdens: its name is appropriate to its situation. We are now entering the wilder, lonelier ravine of the High Dene. The workings of an ancient world industry are around one, with all the glamour of the very names of Lead and Ingot. The scene takes on the wild mantle of Scotia or the Border region, huge rocks seem to peer over at one threateningly from the high cliff face. One is a "rocking stone," which gossip says, can be moved with a slight touch, tho' its weight is 70 tons; and thereby many a tale has grown to hoary age around this stone. Up! Still by the stream, its rock-strewn course awash with swirling water, to where, on the gentler but sterile plateau are the old lead mines anent Yarnbury. Higher still! and we attain Blea tarn, where a scared mother Mallard drops almost at our feet, imitating the flappings of a wounded fowl, in her piteous endeavour to draw our steps from the tarn, where her young brood were hid—the spirit of sacrifice for another's safety exemplified in a duck of the wild, instinctive religion learnt from the Book of Nature.

We are now in the middle waist of the high moor, a bracing air, subtly scented off the undulating leagues of ling or purple heather in August, elevates our senses to a keen pitch of well-being; the only sounds those of Nature's making, the burr-r of a startled grouse, the whaup of a curlew, the ringing wail of the pee-wee, and that almost

unearthly shriek or skrike of a disturbed snipe. Here, Blea Beck, falls through a deep and wild gorge to Grimwith, and around us are the pathetic deserted lead mine workings. Their spoil heaps, a scarce enough weed where lead is not, in unbroken turf a guide to the metal below, grows the Alpine Pennycress. From Priest tarn a track, over which human feet have trod these 2,000 years at least, leads over Gill beck and across the moors by way of Yarnbury down



A BEND OF THE WHARFE, NEAR THE STEPPING STONES.

[T. Dawson]

the old fell way to Grassington. This is both an appetising and illuminating walk. Doubtless the tourist who ventures so far will see a notice board, on which is a warning to (so-called) trespassers: do not worry! it is quite harmless, salute and pass on, since it is but a vain and audacious attempt—not of right—to close this primæval trackway over the watershed ridge into Nidderdale.

Starting from Hebden Grassington is a short 2 miles by the road, passing Halfway House and High Cross; the pleas-

antest ramble however is through the pastures by the river, in autumn dotted with the pale purple colchicum "crocus" blossoms, styled "naked ladies" vulgarly, because the leaves delay showing until spring; the woods of Lythe and Isingdale Glen are crossed; and further on, below Grassington Low Mill, at a beautiful bend of Wharfe, are the Hipping stones, gingerly stepping on which we cross to the ancient church of Linton, seated so peacefully by the turbulent Wharfe. The original church was Norman, but there are not wanting proofs that the foundation preceded the Conquest.



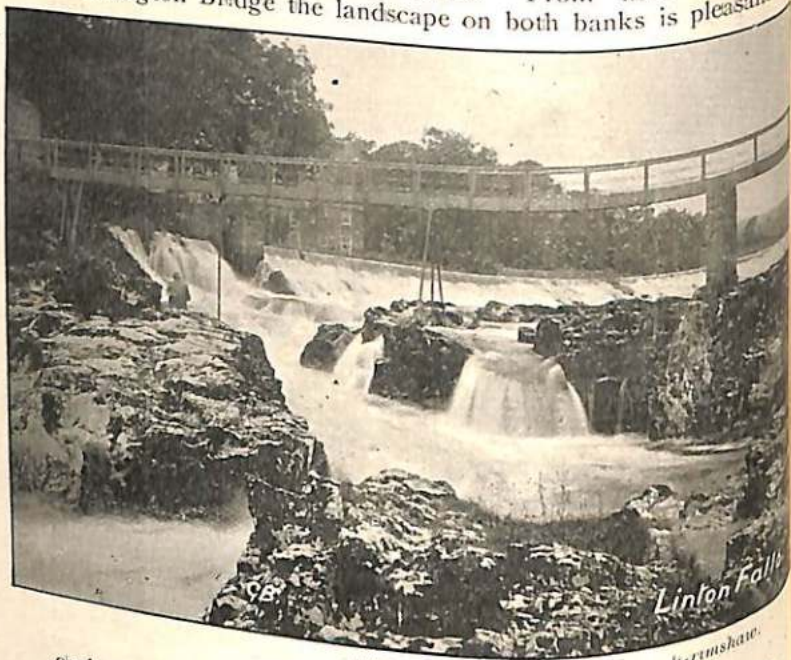
LINTON CHURCH.

[A. Haselgrave]

Here, taking the mind back a century or two, prior to the enclosing of the moors we may perhaps indulge in an old-time picture; that of the "Fell Folk" in ancient habiliments, wending their way over moor-brow and swale to worship and make homage to their Faith. There was no footbridge over the "falls" then, no factory and cottage row spoiling the prospect such as we see to-day. The house at the entrance to the Kirkyard "Church Yett" was formerly an inn, so placed for the refreshment of those journeying from afar. So reader, you may mentally construct the whole scene, when the Moor-men—whom a former Rector of Linton, not to his credit, described as "Baptised Brutes," gathered from far and near, during Festival Thanksgiving or the "Mystery" Plays, one of which was that of "Rush-Bearing"—i.e., the bringing of a tribute of freshly-cut

"seaves" to bestow the floor of the church. It was a pretty as well as a good old custom: a bevy of young girls bearing armfuls of rushes, adorned with flowers, to the Kirk-

At flood time the Wharfe at Linton "falls" is hurled over the obstructive rocks that make the "rapids" with thunderous roar, the grey clouds of spray and foam flung forth adding to the weird effect. From here to the Grassington Bridge the landscape on both banks is pleasant



LINTON FALLS.

Lortmshale.

and pastoral. At Linton falls a substantial footbridge spans the rapids, and a flagged causeway, the Kirk path gives a short access for foot-passengers to and from Grassington.

Linton, three-quarters of a mile south of its Church, is a charmingly characteristic Craven village, its dwellings clustered pleasantly about the green. A stream barely deep enough to cover its pebbles, ripples, and wimplers through the centre of the spacious "green"; yet this same stream at flood is so forceful as to formerly make crossing it

dangerous to man or beast; that was before the bridge over the beck was built. Behind to the east the ground swells upwards to Elbolton and Thorpe fell. To the west are the gently rolling pastures and clumps or "munts" of trees reaching to Threshfield.

Its houses have many quaint and picturesque features about them, invitive of diversion to visitors. Old mullioned stanchioned windows, curious porches, and carved lintels, bearing dates, as at many other Craven places.



LINTON OLD HALL

William Jones

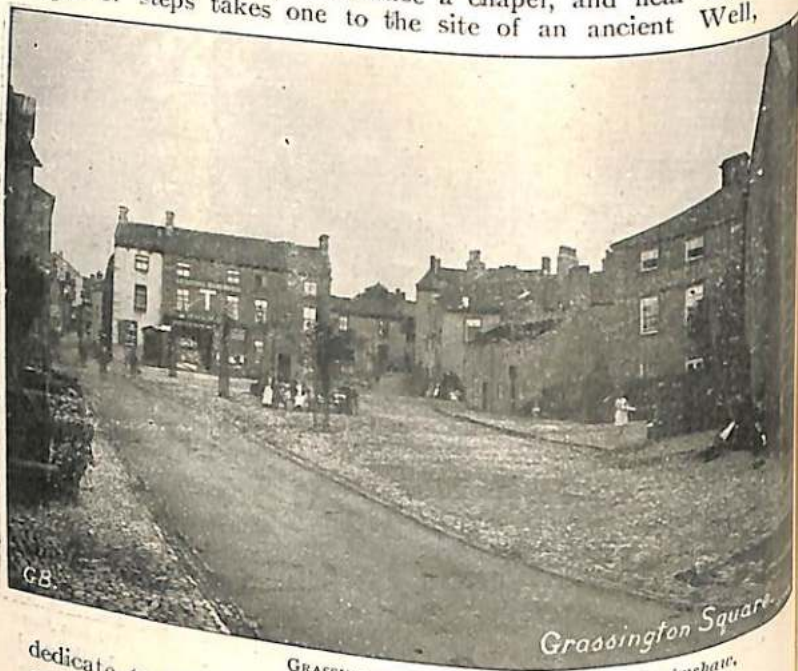
Linton hospital, a commanding structure, was built and endowed by one Richard Fountayne in 1721. He was a Craven lad who went "fra Linton toon into the wide world to seek his fortune, and having found it, raised himself this goodly memorial in his native place."

The outer walls of Linton Old Hall are worth the attention of the antiquary. Linton House, and also that of Troutbeck, add more, of genteel charm to the rurality of this little Arcady.

## CHAPTER IV.—GRASSINGTON.

Descending Great Bank, and crossing Bow Bridge, which spans the Linton and Threshfield becks, we next note Threshfield's ancient Grammar School, and in a brief walk work round to Grassington bridge.

On the right, near the foot of the bridge is an old house that report says was once a chapel, and near it a flight of steps takes one to the site of an ancient Well,

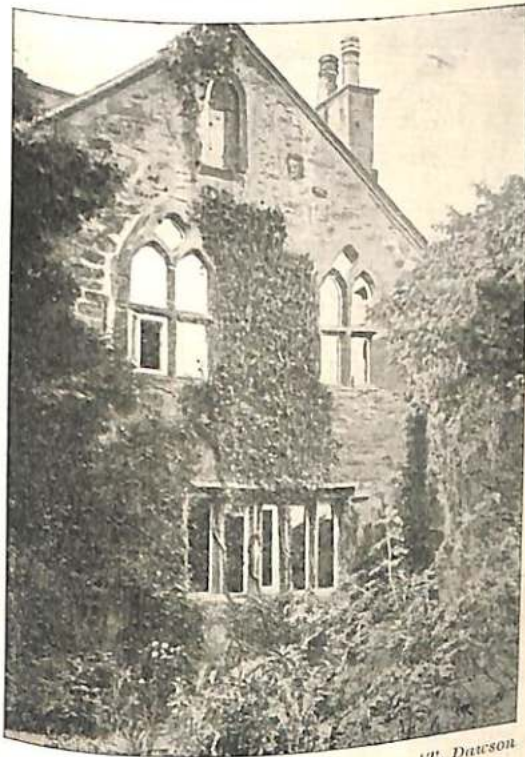


GRASSINGTON SQUARE.

[Grimshaw.]

dedicate to Our Lady, whereat pilgrim wayfarers made prayer and supplication previous to essaying the dangerous ford of Wharfe. This was before the bridge was built. In pre-Reformation times the "virtues" of its water were held to be efficacious for many ailments. In later centuries love-lorn and heart-sick maidens, and their swains held tryst beside its waters to breathe anew, but perhaps with unrevealed differences their soul yearnings, and lip services of

At the south-west foot of the bridge, a stile in the wall leads to an ancient way along the south bank of the river. This is a delighting walk through wood and over mead, with vignettes of the brown silvan-bordered Wharfe. Ultimately this path emerges into the highway at Netherside Hall.

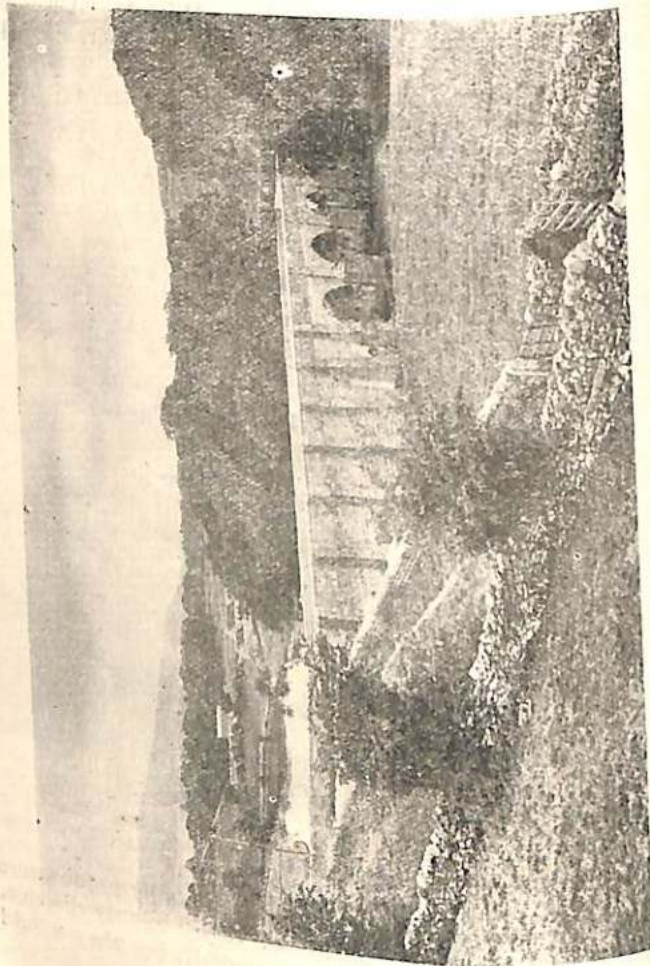


GRASSINGTON OLD HALL.

[T. Dawson]

There have been several unsuccessful attempts by landowners to stop this and other old "rights of way" in this district. That there is a charm in the land they admit, but they would fain keep nature treasures to themselves.

Indeed, where is the pilgrim to these parts who has not paused on Grassington Bridge, that "goodly structure," and



GRASSINGTON BRIDGE.

meditated on the loveliness of the scene—nay, even gone further, maybe, and, like Ruskin, asked the meaning. Certainly, up or down the river every part in the picture has its different value, strikes some similar yet varying note, each and all interestingly harmonious and beautiful.

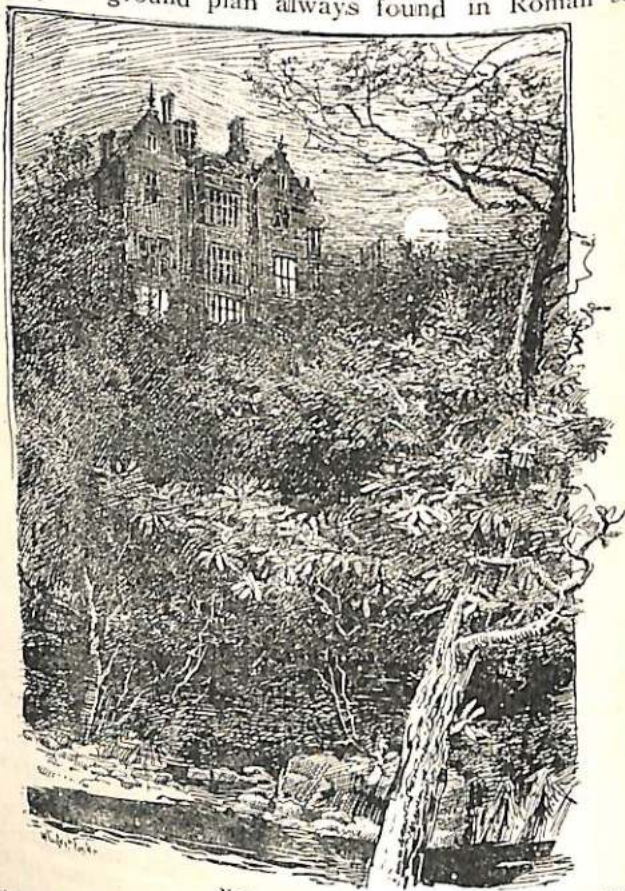
From the bridge, zig-zagging with the many twining uphill road here, Grassington is speedily gained. Standing, healthily high on a gently sloping limestone terrace or shelf, Grassington's position full in the sun on the southern slope of the dale is, for Craven-land, unique. The sun's rays light up early and till late gladden the hearts and quicken to fuller life the bodies of its people, native and visitors alike. There is medically now that it has a good water supply, and electric light! much to be said of a residence here, as already many town-dwellers have proved. The aromas and ozonic qualities of the moorland air are ever about, their diffused balsams are wafted on the slightest breeze into its heart, the wide Market-Place. Life here is as good as being in a sanatorium, nay—it is a natural one ready made.

Has the place a long history, does one ask? Verily, recorded and unrecorded it stretches back into the prehistoric day, beyond the brain of the most astute historian to ken.

Some eight hundred years ago the Grassington of that day stood further away, back in the hollow behind High Close Pasture and Grasswood; that was in the Anglo-Danish period, and on that site it remained until the 13th century; in fact, one or two cottages existed at Old Grassington (as the spot was called), until the 18th century. Yet strange as it may appear, centuries before the Anglo-Danish town was reared, a much greater settlement of people existed on the moorland reaching from Grassington (Town Head) by the old Soke Mill and extending over High Close Pasture towards Coniston Moor.

Abundant evidences of this ancient occupation have been forthcoming, but who the people were and the reason of their location here, is too long a story to be properly told in this little book. To some extent the pages of its history can be unfolded by the inspection of the little Museum of antiquities under the charge of John Crowther, who is himself a verit-

able mine of knowledge concerning this district. That the foundations in High Close Pastures are not of Roman formation I am fully convinced. There is none of that regularity of ground plan always found in Roman settle-



NETHERSIDE HALL.

[Gilbert Foster

ments. They probably point to the remains of a large Brigantian settlement, who settled on this place of vantage to withstand incoming Roman invaders. The founding of the present Grassington goes back over seven centuries, when

Nigel-de-Plumpton in the 12th century, began the Manor Hall, the predecessor of the one now standing just off the main street, and which adds an interesting architectural feature to the place. Gradually other rough timbered dwellings arose about the townhead, chiefly housing the lord's retainers. Slowly the new town arose, and meanwhile the ancient settlement gradually became more and more deserted. Then came the sequestration of Monasteries, after which a race of sturdy and free yeomen arose in this district. The fact of this can be read in the strongly-built better class of homesteads which arose after this period, putting a finish to the new Grassington. This can still be seen in the thick walls of the older class of houses, and the date of building and the initial of the builders carved on the door lintels, chiefly bearing dates from 1612. From a mere hovel the house grew to be more comfortable; strong carved oak chairs, settle, chest, cupboard, etc., pannelled oak interiors and huge four-posted bedsteads bearing the initials of the owner became general. A Charter was granted to the Plumptons for a weekly Market in 1280.

The Market Place was open to the moors. It was the gradually increasing growth of the new town which hemmed it in as if for want of space, outward and upward. All the same these ancient, crooked, dog-legged streets, alleys, and middles, give character and add interest to the place.

Grassington is rich in tradition, custom, and folk lore. "Clock dressing" and other singular doings cluster thickly around the feast time here, but compared with fifty years ago the old sports and customs seem to be mostly "honoured in the breach." In the old days, actors and actresses, afterwards famous, trod the stage of the Grassington theatre! You will still find the old barn-like building which served as theatre in a back street, but the transformation which has come about has left few traces of a play-house, where, besides others famed in the "histrionic art"—Edmund Kean and Harriet Mellon charmed the Grassingtonians. There was likewise Tom Airey, a notable stage-walker; and one "Garrs," whose name shews his fore-elders belonged to the place, and took their name from Garston or Girston, the old

name for Grassington. There were indeed grand doings afoot for dales' folk in those bygone days. People flocked like sheep from every village and homestead round about; all are departed now, and Tom Airey is now sleeping by the sounding Wharfe.

Of old the "Wisemen" were in great request in Craven, and their descendants bearing the above name, although not following the "seers'" profession, are perhaps wiser than their forbears, still muster strongly in the dale.

Apart from its healthy situation, the walks around Grassington over fell, moor, through forest, or by the banks of the bright sparkling river, make the town a convenient centre. A grand bracing moorland walk is up the fell road leading from the Town Head and from thence across the moors to Ramsgill or Middlesmoor. These paths are nearly as old as the hills, and have been trod for centuries, and are the heritage of every free-born Briton.

Another stiff moorland walk is the one to Mossdale; the way leads over High Close Pastures, past Barras, and up Gill Beck, into the jaws of Mossdale—the loneliest of gorges. Shut away from the world the place is strangely silent—a Rip-Van-Winkle sort of impression prevails, disturbed only by the eerie cry of a curlew, or the chuck-chuck of startled moor bird, and the purling of the little stream wimpling the length of the rough rock-strewn course, until swallowed up in the greedy mouth of the cavern.

Mossdale was formerly the scene of much lead mining industry as abundant "spoil" heaps, and old works testify; but we have touched on these in the Howgill walk from Hebden. Miners' superstitions, originating in subterranean noises, are ripe; earth bound spirits, fancy born and bred, are, as a matter of course, supposed to originate them.

It is an eerie spot, so we need not be surprised at the miners, who of old, heard strange supernatural sounds and noted the omens which, according to their knowledge, portended disaster.

Grass-wood, "Higher" and "Lower," by the Wharfe bank, is a silvan Eldorado: its scars, with such suggestive names as "Gregory" and "Dew-bottom," its dingles and

glades and sun-shot "oak-openings," make it "a precious possession" of the mountain health-resort. From its planned pathways, with well-thought of seats, from whence lovely views, south, east, and west are obtained, render it sooner or later the Mecca towards which every pilgrim turns. Netherside Hall, set in its hanging wood, below, forms a picturesque foreground; its suspension bridge over the river here is closed to the public. The Wharfe at Gaits-



LOOKING NORTH-WEST OVER THE WHARFE COUNTRY FROM GRASS WOOD. (Grimshaw)

rills, or Ghaistrills, though it lacks any legend, is quite as striking and romantic in its features as the Strid at Bolton. The onrush of pent up waters through numerous and narrow trenches in the limerock bed of the stream, its iridescent sparkling setting off well the interlaced greenery of the natural rockery of the river bank, have a great fascination for all who once view them.

Upwards by the river we wander until we reach the spot where Tom Lee's body hung in chains for his foul murder of

Dr. Petty. Beautiful views of the dale up to Kilnsey can be obtained from the many points of vantage hereabouts. To the right abutting on the north bank of Grasswood is Dibb Scarr, a very interesting locality. About the Scar lies Bastow Wood, and to the north Kelbar Helks, bleached terraces of rocks spreading towards Coniston.

That wizard's bush, the "Mezereon," which flowers in early spring before the leaves come, is also to be found on Far Gregory, in Grass-wood and in a scrubby spot above Dibb Scar.

West from Threshfield, interesting in many ways to tourists, lies Skyrethorns, with its stretches of primeval forest growth. The broken contours show richly. Light knolls of brakefern, rosebush, hazel, thorn ash, and bramble, here and there scored with the lines of leafy walled-in lanes, wild nature beautifully adorned; chequered by stretches of wilder land, pits, and traces of ancient excavations, bounded by the softening contrast of some refreshingly green glade or munt of timber; oases, as it were, in a wild bleak land.

Near the Heights Farm is Calf Hole Cave. The entrance or porch is divided into 2 openings by a natural buttress of limestone rock, giving the impression of an entrance to some ancient kirk. Ages ago the sea swept over here and waves lashed into the cave, the floor of which is covered by a deep bed of fine yellow sand to the depth of six feet. From here is a grand and invigorating walk to Malham, The Cove, and Gordale.

## CHAPTER V.

### A WILD-FLOWER RAMBLE.

It is positively not "worth while" to be precise in one's tale of how many—over 500 at lowest—different sorts of wild-flowers may be handselled by the visitor to Grassington. Probably not one in a hundred "cares twopence" what their names may be, and this is not a botanist's catalogue of

"Flora's" features. But who cares to take the green ways that lace Bastow and Grass wood, and Sweet Side's slope, and the river paths from Linton bridge to Netherside, if he or she go leisurely, and use eyes, will find treasure-trove in plenty for a hand posy, from Easter to Michaelmas.

From the first mild days of March the pilewort gilds wetly, and the ladysmock-creases clot like spilt milk, the sodden pasture meads by the river; and primroses (inexactly called "yellow" by Wordsworth) begin to spatter curdy blotches of bloom in more sheltered spots; and from then on until the golden-rod and the hawkweeds have died down, and the bracken of the thickets has undergone its chameleonic change from green, to cold russet, there is hardly any hitch in the weekly supply of new wild flowers about Grassington. But the choicer beauties are easier to enumerate (if we feared not helping to extinction) than to gather, at any one season, since it is very rarely that above one or two of them grow together in any one spot. And "hardy" (in gardeners' sense) as they all must be to flourish, wildly, at all, each has its special needs and requirements as to soil and shelter. The lovely hairbell seems to "prefer" sand; while nowhere else but on the sunkissed limestone flags and mead scarps of the Ghaistrills will the searcher discover the Spring Cinquefoil (*Potentilla verna*). On lime rock and in turf the sweetest-when-bruised Wild Thyme, with the mountain Lady's-beadstraw (*Galium pusillum*) mingle, in many places, to make a glorious earth-rug of purple picked out with gold. These hardies here take the place of the jewel-eyed lizards further south, and up here in the sweet air of Lea Green or Bastow, the summer crowns them sole king and queen of their little domains. In the next close neither grow, but—*there*, something else, most likely the silver-star Leadwort (*Arenaria verna*), or the yellow mountain pansy, the blood geranium, the butter-and-eggs Bird's-foot, or the gold-wreath milk-vetch (*Hippocrepis comosa*), of which there are the blue or azurine milkwort (*Polygala*), of which there are three distinct races at Grassington. These, and others too numerous to mention, grow mostly in the open; in the silvan shade, and shelter of the thicket growth of Bastow, the looker-out will find very different kinds of flower faces; but I