

HISTORICAL SKETCH OF THE FOREST OF
ROSSENDALE.

By Thomas Newbigging.

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THE district whose history I propose briefly to sketch to the members of this Society, is one which is, in an especial degree, an example of the transforming power of Trade and Manufactures, in combination with that energy and industry so largely characteristic of the Anglo-Saxon race. From an almost profitless tract of country, the Forest of Rossendale,* within a period of three hundred and sixty years has grown to be a flourishing and important section of the county palatine.

Previous to and at the time of the Norman Conquest (A.D. 1066), the four forests of Pendle, Trawden, Rossendale and Accrington, were embraced in the general name of the "Forest of Blackburnshire;" and though the different divisions of that forest were probably well known by their distinctive appellations, yet we may form a fair estimate of the limited extent of occupation and cultivation throughout this portion of the county of Lancaster in those remote times,

* With respect to the derivation of the name Rossendale, the historian of Whalley remarks,—“I was once inclined to deduce this word from the British “*rhos*, a bottom; but the following etymology, for which I am indebted to “Baxter (*vid. Gloss. in voc. Carnovacæ*), is much more appropriate,—‘*Pagus* “*iste, de Russeo puto graminum colore, Rossen dicitur, nam ejusmodi ericeum* “*pascuum Britannorum vulgo Rhos dicitur.*’ If there was a circumstance about “the place which would strike the observation of the first colonists above every “other, it must have been the brown and dreary hue of its native herbage, which “the labours of three centuries have not been able to overcome.”—*History of Whalley*, 3rd ed., p. 220.

from a consideration of the significant and interesting fact, that the broad and far-extending woodlands were so dovetailed one into the other, as to justify the title which included them all in one vast, wide-reaching forest. The area of the whole was about $76\frac{1}{2}$ square miles, or 48,945 statute acres—the superficial extent of Rossendale, which is the largest of the four, being about $30\frac{1}{2}$ square miles, or 19,505 statute acres. Its great natural and prominent boundaries are Flour-scar, Cliviger Moor, Hameldon Hill, Cribden Hill, Musbury Tor, Coupe Law, Brandwood Moor and Tooter Hill. The Booths called *Musbury* and *Yate* and *Pickup Bank*, though detached from Rossendale proper, and lying outside of the boundary specified, are, nevertheless, reckoned as part of the forest.

The ancient Chase or Forest of Rossendale has no Roman history. No remains, Roman in character, (with the exception of the Road through Musbury, leading to Ribchester,) so far as has yet been ascertained, have ever been discovered within its boundaries. Whilst that powerful race, the inhabitants of the ancient mistress of the world, remarkable for their proficiency alike in the arts of war and peace, have left behind them in neighbouring localities abundant memorials of their former presence and possession, it would seem as though Rossendale had held out no inducements to tempt them to its fastnesses, or to lead any of them to select it as their place of habitation.

The uncivilized Britons who doubtless constituted its first inhabitants, scant in number, and barbarous in their social and domestic habits and in their religious customs, were probably permitted by the Roman invaders of the island to remain unmolested in their primitive retreat.

Equally wanting is Rossendale in early British relics. If the religious rites and ceremonies of our half-naked and painted ancestors were ever performed within the glades of

the Forest, the monumental remains of their druidical worship have disappeared in the long centuries which have elapsed since their occupation of the land. But it is safe to conclude that the Forest was too sparsely populated ever to have been selected as the site of the imposing and often cruel religious pageants of our barbarian forefathers. Their dwellings, generally of the rudest construction, were not calculated to survive the storms of time, or even the less formidable influences of the changeful seasons. These, therefore, have also perished, leaving behind them no trace of their existence.

The natural features of a country, or a district, are usually its most permanent monuments; and if we turn to the hills and other localities comprised within or bordering upon the district under consideration, we find that many of their present names—as, for example, Crag, Cridden or Cribden, Cliviger, Hameldon, &c.—are of British origin.

That the Forest of Rossendale was the resort, probably for centuries both before and after the Roman era, of wild animals of different kinds, is sufficiently attested by names which exist to the present time.

The Wild Boar tribe has left behind it tokens of its presence, deeper and more ineffaceable than the marks of its warlike tusks upon the trees of its favourite haunts. There is no mistaking the parentage of such names as Boarsgreave, Hogshead, Sowclough and Swinshaw.

The Wolf, ferocious and cowardly, has disappeared from its lurking place in the Forest; but we still retain amongst us the evidences of its occupation in the names, Wolfenden, Wolfenden-Booth and Wolfstones.

That a species of Wild Oxen ranged the hills and hollows where now our domestic animals graze, is proved by remains of horns and bones from time to time disintombed from the *débris* deposited in the valleys by our mountain streams,

whose courses have been diverted, or whose beds have been narrowed and appropriated to other uses.

The different varieties of the Deer tribe, it is well known, were denizens of the Forest, which they wandered at will, and no doubt supplied both food and raiment to the partially clothed human inhabitants in this and surrounding neighbourhoods.* Names having reference to the Deer and its kindred are plentiful throughout the district: we have Deerplay, Stacksteads [Stagsteads], Staghills, Cridden or Cribden, which, says the historian of Whalley, "is pretty obviously "*keiru don*, the Hill of Stags. It is precisely such an "elevation as that animal affects during the heat of summer, "while the fallow-deer graze on the plains or slopes "beneath; and it might continue to merit an appellation "acquired in the remotest ages of antiquity till within "less than three centuries of the present time."† Bacup, or Baycop, the cop or hillock, according to the same authority, where the deer stood at bay. With regard to the derivation of this latter, the late Mr. James Hargreaves in the appendix to his Life of the Rev. John Hirst, remarks,‡ "The deer in "their excursions for pasture, or play, would run down the "valley from Deerplay hill as far as where the village of

* At a Meeting of the Manchester Geological Society, held in the Natural History Museum in that City, in April, 1864, Captain Aitken, of Bacup, "exhibited a pair of antlered horns, a bone and a short horn, and stated that the "antlers and bone were discovered whilst excavating for a drain in a bed of river "gravel, six feet from the surface, in the valley of the River Irwell, near "Rawtenstall. The river appeared to have changed its bed frequently, and had, "doubtless, at one time flowed where the discovery was made. The antlers and "leg bone were found at the same place, and as they did not exhibit any appearance "of having been water worn, it was reasonable to infer the animal died near the "place where they were found. They appeared to be the remains of the red "deer, which, tradition says, were very abundant in the Rossendale valley. The "short horn was found along with several others, about a quarter of a mile "higher up the valley, and was probably the horn of *Bos Primigenius*. Near "the same place two antlers were found a short time ago, resting upon a loamy "clay, under a bed of peat, seven to eight feet deep, near a spring of water, in a "depression of the surface, where animals formerly resorted for the purpose of "drinking." One of the antlers is now in the possession of Captain Aitken.—*Transactions of the Manchester Geological Society*, vol. iv., p. 333.

† *History of Whalley*, 3rd ed., p. 8.

‡ p. 303.

“Bacup now stands, and then return, or *back up* again. “From this circumstance, it is said, the place derived its name ‘Backup.’ But modern times have dropped the k, and so changed both the spelling and pronunciation into “‘Bacup.’”* Rockliffe, or rather Roclyffe, as it is given in ancient documents, the cliff that afforded shelter to, or was the favourite haunt of the roebuck. Staghills, Harthill, Buck-earth, and others.

Wild animals of an inferior class were also plentiful, such as the badger, the otter, the fox, the wild cat and the weasel; and in regard to the ubiquitous squirrel, it is affirmed that, without once touching *terra firma*, it could traverse the Forest, leaping from bough to bough of the thick intermingling trees, from Rawtenstall to its extreme eastern limits at Sharneyford.

Rosendale is not rich in relics; but for extent and importance the “Dyke” or “Dykes” at Broadclough, near Bacup, eclipse a multitude of lesser remains to be found in other localities. This work is described by Dr. Whitaker, the historian, as “an entrenchment to which no tradition is annexed that may serve to ascertain either its antiquity, or the end it was designed to answer. It is cut out from the gentle slope of a rising ground, in one direction, nearly parallel to the

* To say the least of it, there is a lack of dignity about this proposed etymology, which leads us to inquire if no better account of the origin of the name can be given; and, indeed, the same writer, as though he had experienced a similar feeling, adds further:—“Since the above was written the writer has been informed that a certain learned gentleman of the law in pleading a cause before the court at Lancaster, contended that the village derived its name from *boy*, red, and *cops*, earth; viz.: red-earth, and that it should be spelled ‘Baycop.’ This etymology does not appear very probable, as the soil in the vicinity is in general not red, but black.” Let me add a further suggestion. Accepting the signification of *bay* in this connection to be red, and *cop* to mean hill, the terms may have been originally used metaphorically to indicate the large abundance of red deer frequenting the hill side, making it in appearance a *bay cop*, or red hill.

Mr. T. T. Wilkinson, F.R.A.S., suggests “Back-coppice,” the back clearing on the sloping sides of the valley, which is not very satisfactory; and “Bay-copse,” with reference to the colour of the native herbage. In support of the latter, I have often been struck with the red appearance which the uncultivated moorlands around Bacup present in certain seasons of the year.

"horizon, for more than six hundred yards in length, not
 "exactly in a right line, but following the little curvatures of
 "the surface. In one part of the line, for about one hundred
 "yards, it appears to have been levelled, and in another,
 "where it crosses a clough, is not very distinct; but more
 "than four hundred yards of the line exhibit a trench
 "eighteen yards broad in the bottom, and of proportionate
 "depth: a most gigantic and at the same time almost
 "inexplicable work, as it could only have been intended for
 "military purposes; and yet, in its present state, must have
 "been almost useless as a fortification—for, though it would
 "have defended a great army in front, yet their flanks might
 "have been turned with the greatest ease, and the whole
 "might have been destroyed in their trenches, from the high
 "grounds which immediately command it. On the whole, I
 "am inclined to think it one side of a vast British camp,
 "which was intended to have been carried round the crown
 "of the hill, but for some reason, never to be recovered
 "by us, was left in its present unfinished and useless state.
 "Abating for the herbage with which it is covered, the
 "present appearance of it is precisely that of an unfinished
 "modern canal, though much deeper and wider in its
 "dimensions."*

The same monument of antiquity is thus alluded to by Mr.
 Wilkinson, in a paper read before this Society,† entitled
 "The Battle of Brunanburh, and the probable Locality of the
 "Conflict:" "Broadclough Dyke is a formidable and gigantic
 "entrenchment near Bacup. It measures more than 1,800 feet
 "in length, is situated at the edge of a gentle slope, and has
 "a trench at least 54 feet broad at the bottom. What can
 "have been the object of such an extensive earthwork can,
 "of course, only be matter for conjecture. From its posi-
 "tion, it is capable of protecting a large army in front,

* *History of Whalley*, 3rd ed., p. 221. † *Transactions*, vol. ix, pp. 21, 42.

“but it is easily accessible from the east, and must have
 “been abandoned by its defenders whenever the enemy had
 “turned their flank. Its construction can only have been
 “suggested by temporary necessities, since it has evidently
 “been abandoned in an unfinished state.”

There are several features of interest connected with the Dyke at Broadclough, worthy of remark, which have either escaped the observation of those who have already described it, or for some other reason are left unnoticed by them.

In several parts of the Dyke, in patches throughout its entire length, and within twenty-four or thirty inches from the upper surface, where the herbage is worn off, the shale and soil are clearly visible in their natural, undisturbed layers, proving beyond question that the earth-wall or rampart has not been formed from the loose material dug from the trench, but that, as at present seen, the height of the Dyke (which is eleven or twelve feet in the deepest part) corresponds to the depth of the original excavation. It therefore becomes interesting to enquire how the superabundant soil was disposed of. Either this was originally thrown up by those employed in its construction, so as to form a wall throughout the entire extent, or it was removed to some adjacent hollow in the hill-side. If the former, then the original Dyke must have been nearly double its present height, because the hill which rises to the rear of the earth-work is a continuation of the gradual and regular slope of the land lying below, and extending to the turnpike-road; or else a second Dyke in advance of the first was constructed, and which, being composed of loose material, has been levelled by time. With respect to and in support of the second conjecture, that the soil was removed to some contiguous hollow, the intelligent tenant occupying the farm on which the Dyke is located, informs me that he has repeatedly had occasion to dig trenches in its vicinity, a little distance

below, nearer to the turnpike road; and although he has gone to a depth of six, eight and even ten feet, he has invariably found the soil to be of a loose and apparently filled-up character, largely mixed with fragments of sticks and bark, and other substances foreign to the soil in its natural bed. He also states that the earth is of such a friable nature that, though only at a depth of three feet from the surface, he has had occasion to shore up the sides of the trench with timber to prevent them falling in—in short, altogether differing from the material of an excavation through a natural deposit. The work extends from the farm called “Dykes house,” to the edge of “Whitaker’s Clough,” but is not now continuous throughout its entire length, being obliterated or levelled in the centre for a considerable space; the entrance to the end farthest from Bacup being through a cleft or cutting in the earthwork.

I do not coincide in the view taken both by Dr. Whitaker and Mr. Wilkinson, “that it has evidently been abandoned “in an unfinished state,” because it was not carried round the crown of the hill. There is nothing, in my opinion, about the work which in the least indicates any such intention on the part of those with whom it originated. To have carried it over the hill would have been a stupendous undertaking indeed, as any one viewing the ground will readily admit. But even supposing it had been so carried, the work, according to this theory, would still have been incomplete, unless the rampart had been continued either along the summit or on the other side, and over the hill a second time to unite its extremities, thus forming a continuous wall. Neither am I prepared to agree that it was easily accessible by an attacking force from the east, thus rendering a flanking operation easy of accomplishment. It should be borne in mind that the nature of the approaches to the work has undergone a material alteration since the time of its con-

struction. It is in the highest degree probable—amounting almost to a certainty—that the rising ground to the rear and at its extremities was protected by natural defences in the shape of trees, and a thick undergrowth of shrubs, forming an abattis which would readily be strengthened by the ingenuity of the defenders, and than which, even at the present day, with all the appliances of modern warfare, few better means of protection or defence could be wished for or devised.

The recent careful investigations of Mr. Wilkinson have invested this singular work with more of interest than has hitherto been associated with it, by his having, with marked ability and perseverance, collected together a mass of exhaustive evidence, with regard to the much debated locality of the great struggle between the Saxons and the Danes, which he endeavours, and most successfully, to show, is to be found in the immediate neighbourhood of Burnley; and in connexion with which the Earthwork in question constituted, probably, a not unimportant adjunct.

The present writer is not aware that any considerable relics have been found within the Forest, which would connect the district more immediately with the military presence of the Saxons and Danes; but this may have arisen for want of the frequent use of the plough in our fields. So strong, however, are the probabilities in favour of the conjecture that the Dyke constituted a portion of the line of defensive works in connection with the great battle strife, that it is not at all unlikely that some other memorials of the time may yet be discovered in the locality.

But we are not entirely barren in evidence of even this direct confirmatory nature; for Dr. Whitaker states* that, “In the Red Moss, a part of 240 acres, once within the “Forest,† iron arrow-heads have often been found. These, it

* *History of Whalley*, 3rd ed., p. 366.

† Now in Cliviger.

“is probable, had been aimed against the deer, rather than used in battle. In a field belonging to the author was found a Torques of the purest gold. It was lying upon the surface, having been turned up by the plough or harrow, and picked up by a reaper. The weight is above one ounce and a-half. It was originally a complete circle, then bent back upon itself and twisted round, excepting at the ends, which are looped, as if intended to be fastened about the neck by a cord. It is now in my possession.”

It is not unlikely that the learned historian, had he lived under the light of recent investigations, might have formed a different opinion with respect to the original use of the arrow-heads, and rather attributed their presence to purposes of a warlike character.

The Beacon remains on the neighbouring hills, which Mr. Wilkinson conjectures may have been successively used by Britons, Romans, Saxons and Danes, are highly interesting monuments of antiquity. The one on Thieveley Pike is quite distinct, and is a complete circle in the form of a basin, the circumference round the centre of the embankment being about eighty feet; many of the stones within the ring and in the immediate vicinity bear evident marks of having been charred or scorched by fire.

On a clear day a magnificent view is obtained from the Pike, embracing to the west, Hameldon Hill and the country stretching far beyond to the Irish Sea; to the north-west, Pendle Hill, Ingleborough and Pennyghent; while due north are Worsthorn and Beadle Hill; to the east, Black Hamledon and, inclining a little further south, Studley Pike; more southerly still, Tooter Hill, below Sharneyford, and the bleak profile of Blackstonedge; while nearly due south, are Coupe Law, Cribden, Musbury Tor, Holcombe Hill, and, beyond, the great plain of Lancashire. Occupying, as it does, a central position, the beacon lights of

Thieveley would blazon forth their ominous signals, and answering fires would soon flare on every surrounding hill. This is no vague unsubstantial picture of the imagination: the existing vestiges of occupation by one or other, or all of the primitive tribes in succession, speak a language that can scarcely be misunderstood.

The River Irwell takes its rise in Cliviger, in a large tract of moorland which at one time constituted a part of the Forest. Owing, however, to the carelessness or indifference of the proprietors residing in Bacup Booth, or probably to the superior cunning or unscrupulousness of those of Cliviger, this extensive tract was lost to Rossendale and became a part of Cliviger. The pack-horse road, called the "Limersgate," winds along the Rossendale side of the Cliviger ridge, and from thence away onward over the hill to Yorkshire. This is one of the most ancient roads in the locality, and in past times was the favourite route from the west across the country to the adjoining counties; being travelled, not only by the common people, but by the ecclesiastics and nobles of the land, in all the pomp of ancient dignity, and with the train of followers and retainers, who in bygone days, more than at present, constantly hovered near the footsteps of those born to high estate. It is in the immediate vicinity of this ancient track, now so overgrown with grass and brown heath as scarcely to be distinguished from the other parts of the moor, that the River Irwell takes its rise; and we may with propriety assume that its neighbourhood would be a familiar and welcome halting-place for man and beast.

Rossendale has, from time immemorial, been a favourite hunting ground; and there are, doubtless, still to be found in the Forest, sportsmen as stout of heart and lithe of limb as ever cleared dyke or ditch in the blythe days of yore; but, alas! the quality of the sportsman's game has woefully

degenerated from its pristine excellence. Gone from within its bounds is that right royal brute, the stag; the wild boar and the wolf have given place to a civilisation which tolerates not their existence; even the wily fox has disappeared from its hill sides, and no frugal housewife now laments her spoliated hen-roost. The timid hare alone remains to kindle the huntsman's enthusiasm, and wake the "vollied thunder" of the eager pack.

"The Deans of Whalley, like other ancient and dignified ecclesiastics, were mighty hunters, and enjoyed the right of chase:—firstly, to a considerable extent in other manors adjoining to their own domains; and secondly, within the forests themselves."* It is narrated of Liwlphus, one of the Deans of Whalley, that whilst hunting in the Forest of Rossendale, at a place called Deansgreve, he cut off the tail of a wolf, and in consequence of this incident acquired the appellation of "Cutwulph," being afterwards known by the name of "Liwlphus Cutwulph." This circumstance happened about the reign of King Canute (1016-1035), in whose time the aforementioned Dean lived.

The disforesting of the Forest, which was decreed and commenced during the latter years of the reign of Henry VII, and completed in the reign of Henry VIII, in conformity with the expressed desire of the inhabitants, is the time from which we must date the beginning of the progress of the district. Ever since that period it has been growing in importance—by slow gradations at first, sometimes so as scarcely to be perceived, but afterwards by rapid and surprising strides. The advances which have been made during the present century, have been as substantial as they are remarkable.

The underwritten is an extract from a copy of a decree of the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster of the 4th year

* *History of Whalley*, 3rd ed., p. 55.

of Edward VI, decreeing the chapel in Rossendale to have all such rights and privileges as Parish Churches then had, and in which interesting reference is made to the disforesting of the Forest. It is taken from an old manuscript volume in the possession of George Hargreaves Esq., J.P., of Newchurch, Rossendale :—

“Whereas it appears by a Bill of supplication of the Inhabitants of Rossendale, that the Forrest of Rossendale 44 years ago or thereabouts, being replenished with a few and small number of People, or in manner none at that time did Inhabit, other than the forresters and such other as were appointed to and for the oversight of the Deer; and that the late excellent Princes and Kings of worthy and famous memory, King Henry the 7th and King Henry the 8th, by the advice of their most Honble. Counsels, most graciously considered, that if the Deer were taken out of and from the said forrest, that then the same was like to come and be brought and applyed to some good purpose, as the commonwealth might be increased thereby; and therefore the said Kings gave in commandment, and caused not only that the said Deer should be killed and destroyed, but also, that the ground within the said forrest should be letten out to such of the Inhabitants as wou take the same, and had made thereof to the intent the same forrest might, for the great increase of God's glory and the Commonwealth of this Realme, be Inhabited; and by force thereof and to that intent, the said Forrest was disforrested and granted, demised and let forth, in divers sorts, some part for term of years, and part to hold by copie of Court Roll, after which leases and grants as is aforesd. had and made, the said Inhabitants and takers thereof have Edified and Bullded houses and Tents within the said Forrest, and have inhabited the same; so that where before that time was nothing else but Deer and other savage and wild beasts, there is since then, by the industry and labour of the Inhabits., grown to be a very good and fertile ground; and the same at this day is become very populous, and well inhabited, and replenished with a great number of people. And for as much as the

Castle and Church of Clitheroe, being their Parish Church, is distant 12 miles from the said Forrest, and the way leading between the said Parish Church, and the said forrest is very foule, painfull and Hillous, and the country in the winter season is so extreemly and vehemently cold, that the Children and young Infants in that time of the year, being borne to the Church to be christened, are in great peril of their lives and almost starved with cold; the aged and impotent persons, and women great with child, are not able to travail so far to hear the Word of God, and to learn and be instructed therein, to do their duties to God and to their King; and the dead corpses there like to Lye and remain unburied, at such time as any that doth die and depart this world, for lack of carriage, untill such time as great annoyance do grow to the king's subjects there, by reason that the said Parish Church is so far distant from the said forrest and the ways so foule. And whereas also, before this time, the premises considered, the Inhabitants of the said forrest, about the space of 38 years past or thereabouts, at their own proper cost and charges, made a Chapel of ease in the said Forrest of Rossendale. The charges of every of them in the said Chapel hath been from time to time to an honest minister, who hath with all diligence ministered to the said inhabitants there, in said Chapel, God's most holy word. Also the said Chapel and the said minister hath been sustained and maintained by and with the good devotions and charitable rewards of the well-disposed Inhabitants of the said forrest. And every of the said Inhabitants have given several sums of money, some more, some less—some money, some Chattell, and some of 'em such other gifts and rewards as hath been meet, requisite, and needfull, to and for the intent and purpose of maintenance of the said Chapel and Minister, and the commodity and profit of those things given as are before remembered, have sufficed to the sustaining of the said Chapel, and finding of the minister there. The said inhabitants have of their good Devotions and Charitys borne their own costs and charges, whereby there hath grown no kind of discommodity, charge, or hurt, either to the King's Majesty, or to the Parson or Curate of their

Parish Church before mentioned ; but the same Chapel hath been therewith maintained and kept of their own several charges, costs, and expences, to the better serving of God and of the King, and for the Augmentation and increase, as well of great number of people, as of the Commonweale of this Realm, in so much as by reason thereof the lands within the said forrest, which served before that time but only for the increase of wild beasts, now not only well and substantially manured and occupied, to the increase of tillage, corn, and cattle, but also to the great increase of people and Christian Souls ; for which there was at the time of the disforresting of the said forrest, not above the number of 20 persons in the said forrest, there be in the said forrest at this present day, the number of 1000 young and old people ; of the which people, as of their bound and humble duties, hath required the king his highness, from time to time, hath been as well served in his gracious most regal affairs of his wars, as in any one place within all his highness' dominions ; and for divers other great causes and considerations, the King his highness, and his Council of the Dutchy of Lancaster moving.—It is ordered and decreed by the Chancellor and Council of the Dutchy, that the Inhabitants of the said forrest, and the inhabitants of the Lenches, Brandwood, Rockcliffe, Greaveclough, and Tongue, adjoining and intermingled to and with the said Forrest, for the more ease and quietness, and in avoiding their peril in Travell aforesd., and that God may be the better served, shall from henceforth have, use, and enjoy the said Chapel above specified within the said forrest, together with one parcell of ground, inclosed and invironed with a hedge, called the Chappell yard, for ever.”

The original chapel at Newchurch, which is the one referred to above, was erected in the year 1511, being the second year of the reign of Henry VIII. The first structure was of meagre dimensions, and humble in character, suited to the wants and worldly estate of a scanty and not wealthy people. In the year 1560, the third of the reign of Queen Elizabeth, the original building having become inadequate to the accommodation of a rapidly-increasing population, was taken down

and replaced by a more substantial erection. This latter served for a period of 263 years, when, becoming dilapidated, it was in the year 1824-5 rebuilt and enlarged.

A story is told concerning the original Church of second Henry VIII. It would appear that the intention of the founders was to build it on or near to the site of the present Workhouse at Mitchell-field-nook, about a mile distant, and that the material for the structure was deposited at that place, when one morning it was discovered that the whole had been transported overnight by some unseen power to the hill-side on which the Church stands. Not to be diverted from their purpose, the inhabitants again conveyed the materials to the place which they had originally fixed upon, and appointed a watch to frustrate any further attempts at removal. But one night, as "Dogberry" slumbered at his post—an enchanted sleep, probably—the unseen hands had again been busy, with similar results. A third time the materials were deposited on the chosen site, and, on this occasion, three of the inhabitants appointed to keep watch and ward. As these sat toasting their noses at a wood fire they had kindled, an old lady with kindly countenance, coming past, saluted them with a pleasant "good e'en," at the same time offering them each a share of some refreshment which she carried in her hand. This they had no sooner partaken of, than a profound drowsiness overtook them, ending in a deep and protracted sleep—from which in the morning they were aroused by the shouts of the bewildered rustics, who came only to find that the pranks had a third time been repeated. So yielding to the decision of a power which was not to be out-manceuvred, the builders erected the Church on its present site.*

From the date of the erection of the new church in 1511, to the thirty-second year of the reign of Henry VIII (1541),

* A somewhat similar legend exists in connection with the old churches at Rochdale and Burnley. See Roby's *Traditions of Lancashire*, and also Harland and Wilkinson's *Lancashire Folk Lore*, p. 89.

the population of Rossendale had gone on steadily increasing. At the latter date they amounted, probably, to between 600 and 700 souls. These were widely scattered over the district, and it soon became manifest that one small chapel was insufficient for their accommodation. Measures were accordingly taken by certain of the inhabitants to supply the want, and the result was the erection, on Morrell Height, of Goodshaw Chapel in the year 1542.

At the present time there are ten churches in the district. The following other denominations have chapels in Rossendale, viz. : The Baptists, 15 ; Methodists, 16 ; Independents, 1 ; Catholics, 2 ; Unitarians, 2 ; Quakers, 1 ; and the Israelites, 1. Altogether forty-eight places of worship. Most of these have Sunday schools, and, many of them, Day schools, attached.

As the manners and customs of society undergo change, new officers are called into existence to suit the altered conditions of men and property ; while dignitaries of ancient note, who were once considered to be indispensable for the due administration of the affairs of the times, gradually withdraw from our sight, to exist only by name in the archives of the past. But not only do offices, once important, become in the lapse of time altogether obsolete ; the duties of some of those which continue to exist, change, or are greatly modified by the fleeting manners of each succeeding age. These remarks are specially applicable to the office of the Grave, Greave, or Reeve ; an important functionary here, in days of yore, and wielding a considerable share of authority within his jurisdiction.

Before the introduction of the Magistracy into the district ; when Guardians of the poor, as we now understand the term, had no existence therein ; and when Local Boards of Health were unknown, Rossendale was governed by one of these officers, who bore the title of " Greave of the Forest."

The duties of the Greave were of the most onerous and responsible kind; but they also descended to matters the most trivial and unimportant. Nothing seems to have been too weighty for him to undertake, nothing too insignificant to claim his attention. The volume containing the accounts of the "Greave of the Forest" from the year 1691 down to 1820 is still preserved at Newchurch, and from this we learn that he was the taxing-officer and "bang-beggar" of the district. At one time we find him closely engaged in tracking the footsteps, or in collecting evidence for the prosecution, of some notorious criminal; at another he is relieving the necessities of a poor, half-starved tramp on his way to Yorkshire, or it might be to Liverpool in the opposite direction. Now he is taking measures to ascertain the number and prepare a return accordingly, of all the able-bodied men within the Forest, capable of serving the King his Majesty in "his most just and holy wars;" and again he is giving instructions for the repair of the Stocks at Crawshaw-booth or Bacup, or of the Guide-post at Four-lane-ends. One day he is superintending the erection of a dungeon at one of the villages; on another he is ordering a staff or truncheon for the village constable. The Precepts of the High Constable of the Hundred were all addressed to the Greave, who levied the rates, and was responsible for the proportionate share required to be contributed by the Forest towards the County expenses.

The fulfilment of the office of Greave, which was by no means a sinecure, seems not to have been optional. The person nominated was bound to serve either personally or by deputy. Though the best families of the district were nominally the Greaves of the Forest, they seldom performed the drudgery of the office. The plan of hiring a deputy, and sometimes two, was generally resorted to; and it frequently happened that one person discharged the duties for several

consecutive years, being hired by different Greaves in succession. The Greave was nominated by the principal landowners in the locality, his appointment taking place at the Halmot Court of the Lord of the Manor, held on Michaelmas Day in each year, according to the twenty-ninth clause of "The Customs of the Copyhold of the Honour of Clitheroe." The accounts of the Greave, which varied in amount from £20 to £600 in different years, were presented at a Vestry meeting held annually in the Parochial Chapel, Newchurch, when they were audited, passed, and signed or certified by a number of the inhabitants present, the Incumbent's signature being usually the first attached to the accounts.

Of late years this officer's duties have been much circumscribed, being limited to a periodical attendance at the Halmot Court, and the summoning of juries for the transaction of business appertaining thereto.

Among other old customs still maintained at this court, is the appointment of an Ale taster. The duties belonging to this office (obsolete in most places), are still regularly fulfilled in Rossendale by an officer who does credit to the appointment.

The inhabitants of the Forest of Rossendale are proverbial for their shrewd, enterprising character. Possessing largely the faculty of acquiring and accumulating money, they combine therewith the gift of a wise economy in spending it. With praiseworthy industry, they have surrounded their fire-sides with those material comforts which are denied by Nature to the barren and unfruitful soil of their district. And yet, to charge Nature with withholding her bountiful hand were ungenerous—the abundant supply of coal, the almost inexhaustible mines of excellent stone which crop out on every slope, and the numberless streams that travel down the hill sides to the bosom of the ample valley below; all these, Nature has bestowed on Rossendale with lavish prodigality,

and all have contributed to raise her to her present importance as a manufacturing district.

There is little of what is called "ancient blood" in the locality. A few of the oldest families can trace their ancestors back through two or three centuries, but the chief men of wealth and position have risen from the ranks. The spirit of absenteeism has never prevailed to any extent amongst those who have amassed fortunes in the district, and this is one key to its success and growing importance. They live, as a rule, in the locality, and many of them take an active interest in its progress. The numerous tasteful residences which adorn the hill-sides, and whose cultivated grounds, neatly laid out and planted, relieve the landscape, are evidences of a healthy state of feeling, and of a prevailing desire that the prosperity of the ancient Forest shall be as permanent as it has been rapid.

In order to show the measure of this prosperity and the rate of its increase within the present century, I have compiled the subjoined table of the annual value of the ratable property in the several Townships comprised within the Forest of Rossendale, as fixed by the Committee of Justices in the several years named. The area of each Township or Booth is also given.

FOREST OF ROSSENDALE.

A Table showing the Annual Value of the Rateable Property, as fixed by the Committee of Justices; and the Acreage of each Township or Booth, according to the Ordnance Survey, in statute measure.

Name of Township.	1815.	1829.	1841.	1854.	1866.	Acreage.
Coupe, Lench, Newhallhey, and Hall Carr	£ 8,627*	£ 2,494	£ 4,916	£ 5,083	£ 10,867	1,499
Donnockshaw	—	225	321	361	680	389
Henheads	—	444	611	721	826	317
Higher Booths	5,089	7,961	11,569	10,439	17,497	4,412
Lower Booths	3,187	4,453	6,220	8,408	14,500	1,600
Musbury	1,299	2,379	2,544	2,552	3,567	1,714
Newchurch, Deadwencloough, Bacup, and Wolfenden	7,400	17,278	24,444	35,891	67,560	5,857
Yate and Pickup Bank	1,358	1,841	1,924	1,664	1,776	850
Part of the Township of Spotland, viz.:—Brandwood Higher and Lower end +	3,311	4,592	6,456	7,996	18,000	2,867
Total	30,271	41,626	59,035	73,115	135,273	19,505
		Increase 37.5 per cent.	Increase 41.8 per cent.	Increase 23.8 per cent.	Increase 85 per cent.	

* I am inclined to think that there must have been an error here, which was corrected in subsequent valuations.

+ In the County Rate valuation list, and in the Census returns, Spotland is taken in its entirety. In order to arrive at the population of the Brandwood portion of Spotland, this being part and parcel of Rossendale, I have counted the number of houses therein. These amount to 1,214, which, multiplied by 5, the estimated number of residents in each house, gives a present population of 6,070. I have arrived at the population of previous periods and the annual value by another process, and have no doubt but that the figures are sufficiently near the truth.

The annual rental of the Forest, as represented by the County Rate valuation of 1866, shows an increase of 105,582 per cent. on the "advanced rents," amounting in the aggregate to £127 19s. 6d., confirmed by James I. On the valuation of 1815, the increase to the present time (or within a period of about 50 years,) is 346 per cent.

The increase in the amount and value of property in any district is chiefly dependent on the growth of the population therein. This fact receives a striking confirmation in the population statistics of the Forest of Rossendale. At the time of the building of the "New Church," in A. D. 1511, the population probably did not exceed 200 souls; about nine years before they numbered only 20. In 1551, or forty years afterwards, they had grown to 1,000 young and old. While one hundred years later, during the Commonwealth, they had increased to about 3,000 or 3,500 souls.

The next table, which has been carefully compiled from the different census returns from 1801 to 1861, may be accepted as giving an exact statement of the population of Rossendale.

FOREST OF ROSSENDALE.

Population of the different Townships or Booths, according to the Census Returns, from 1801 to 1861 inclusive.

Name of Township.	1801. Population.	1811. Population.	1821. Population.	1831. Population.	1841. Population.	1851. Population.	1861. Population.
Coupe, Lench, Newhallhey, and Hall Carr	676	786	1,224	1,519	1,716	2,154	2,851
Dunnochshaw	54	63	76	46	41	86	167
Henheads	122	195	246	202	176	160	211
Higher Booths	1,607	2,568	3,172	4,347	3,652	3,827	5,131
Lower Booths	934	1,178	1,513	2,178	2,464	3,778	4,655
Musbury	463	589	728	1,231	1,386	1,228	997
Newchurch, Deadwenclogh, Baenp, and Wolfenden	5,046	6,930	8,557	9,196	11,668	16,915	24,413
Yate and Pickup Bank	1,045	1,230	1,359	1,209	1,008	1,208	1,111
Part of the Township of Spotland, viz.:- Brandwood, Higher and Lower end*	1,537	2,078	2,591	3,059	3,403	4,507	6,070
Total	11,474	15,617	19,466	22,987	25,574	33,863	45,606
		Increase 36.1 per cent.	Increase 24.7 per cent.	Increase 18.1 per cent.	Increase 11.2 per cent.	Increase 32.4 per cent.	Increase 34.7 per cent.

* See Note + page 33.

The increase in the amount of population between 1801 and 1861, a period of sixty years, is 297 per cent. In Rossendale the females exceed the males by nearly five per cent. The Cotton dearth, consequent on the civil war in America, denuded Rossendale of a portion of its population, many families having migrated into Yorkshire and other districts in search of employment. With the resumption of work at the various mills, many of these families have returned; but it is probable that no material increase has taken place in the amount of the population since the census of 1861.

A word or two on the climate of Rossendale. If the hills, always beautiful objects in themselves, rising on each side of the valley, serve to create purifying currents of air, healthful and invigorating in their action, they entail certain disadvantages upon the residents in their locality—disadvantages which are common to most mountainous districts—they bring down the rain in plentiful abundance. This, combined with the heavy nature of the soil, and its thick substratum of clay, renders the climate damp and foggy; and in certain directions of the wind exceptionally cold, anything but congenial to delicate organizations. A healthy and strong constitution will thrive and grow stronger amidst the air of the Rossendale hills, but for persons of delicate frame, there are doubtless more desirable places of abode.

With its abundant rains, however, Rossendale possesses advantages which it would be unfair to overlook; they fill its wells to overflowing, providing copious supplies of water for domestic and sanitary purposes; and they cleanse the streets of its villages from accumulations of impure matter.

Rossendale is essentially a manufacturing valley. Its agricultural capabilities are not such as to attract the husbandman, or adequately to repay him for his toil. Its prevailing formation being an unkindly rock, and its soil of

an uncongenial clayey character, damp and cold, it possesses but few of those features of beneficent vegetation, so grateful to the eye, which distinguish the limestone and some other districts of England. Dairy farming is the only class of agriculture which is profitable here. Butter and milk of average quality are produced; and the abundant population of the valleys supplies the farmer with a ready market for the sale of those commodities.

Epidemic diseases have rarely prevailed to any great extent in Rossendale. The style hitherto generally adopted in the erection of houses within the district, however, is not such as to promote the health of the inhabitants; neither is there that due attention paid to drainage and other arrangements of a sanitary character, so essential to the well-being of a community.

The Trade of the district is a subject of interest, and will now briefly occupy attention.

In the latter years of the reign of Henry VIII the Woollen manufacture was introduced into the district, and during a period of about 300 years formed the staple trade of Rossendale. The following statement sets forth the extent of that trade at the present time:—

Number of woollen manufacturers.....	11
Number of hands employed	1200
Looms at work	700
Nominal horse power	450
Weekly wages paid	£800
Capital employed, about.....	£300,000

The staple goods produced are baizes, used as clothing by the troops and natives of the Brazils, and the east and west coasts of South America.

Another branch of this important industry has sprung up in Rossendale within recent years, viz., the Felted Carpet trade:—

Manufacturers engaged therein.....	5
Hands employed	200
Weekly wages paid	£210
Producing about 25,000 pieces, or nearly 1,000,000 yards of Felt Carpet per annum.	
Capital employed, about.....	£40,000

The Printing of these, and some few woven goods, forms an important item in the industry of the district, there being—

Woollen printing works	9
Employing block printers	250
Boys and girls	250
Other persons	80 to 100
Weekly wages paid	£500
Capital employed.....	£15,000

Bringing the different departments of the Woollen trade together, we have the following result :—

Department.	Hands Employed.	Paid in Wages, Weekly.	Capital Employed.
Spinning and Weaving	1,200	£ 800	£ 300,000
Felting	200	210	40,000
Printing.....	600	500	15,000
Total.....	2,000	1,510	355,000

The trade of Silk weaving was at one time, near the beginning of the present century, followed to some extent in Rossendale; as also was the manufacture of gingham—a fabric having a cotton warp and linen weft—but these never assumed proportions of any magnitude, and at the present day are not found anywhere in the locality.

The Cotton manufacture was destined to take deeper root in the district, and of this, the staple industry of our time, we shall now speak. To the introduction of this branch of manufactures, more than to all other causes combined, is undoubtedly due the remarkable increase which has taken place in the population of Rossendale within the present century. To the development of that trade are also to be attributed the accumulation of wealth in many hands, the greatly augmented

value of the ratable property, and the advancement of the inhabitants in material prosperity and comfort.

It is probable that the Cotton manufacture, which began to assume importance in this country about the middle of the 17th century, did not find its way into Rossendale till near the end of the century following. It is not easy to determine with certainty the exact date when Cotton first began to be worked in the district; there is, however, good reason for conjecturing that no cotton goods were produced here prior to the year 1770.

The information contained in the following table of particulars of the extent of the Cotton trade in Rossendale at the present time, is founded chiefly on actual returns furnished by the different manufacturers, and, where these were not obtained, upon the most careful estimates:—

<i>Particulars of the Cotton Manufacture in the Forest of Rossendale, in 1867.</i>			
	COTTON.	HARD WASTE.	TOTAL.
No. of Mills	119	26	145
Nominal Horse-power	5,040	350	5,390
No. of Spindles, Mule and Throstle	930,000	42,500	972,500
No. of Looms	22,300	720	23,020
Hard Waste Devils	140	140
Pounds Raw Cotton consumed annually	71,200,000	71,200,000
Value of the Raw Cotton, Jan. 8th, 1867	£3,560,000	£3,560,000
Pounds Yarn produced annually..	58,125,000	3,668,000	61,793,000
Value of Yarn, Jan. 8th, 1867 ..	£4,117,000	£153,100	£4,270,100
No. of Hands employed.....	19,500	790	20,290
Amount paid in Wages weekly ..	£12,500	£520	£13,020
Capital.....	£2,080,000	£85,000	£2,165,000

A surprising result, truly, when it is remembered that, at one time within the memory of persons still living, the whole of the cotton consumed in Rossendale was brought into the district on the backs of pack-horses!

Rossendale has borne a conspicuous and honourable part in furthering the Co-operative movement, and in future years this will count for something in its history. In the district and its immediate neighbourhood there are twenty-one co-operative mills, having an invested capital amounting to nearly half a million of money; the shareholders ranging in number from eight to ten thousand, and by far the largest proportion of these belonging to the operative classes. In addition to the mills, there are nine Co-operative stores in Rossendale, carrying on a very large trade in the sale of groceries, drapery goods and other commodities.

Of those engaged in trades directly dependent upon the Cotton manufacture, we have in Rossendale Cotton Warp Sizers, Reed and Heald manufacturers &c. A large business is carried on in Calico Printing and Dyeing. Other important trades in the district are the Iron and Brass Founders', Boiler Makers', Machinists' and Millwrights'. According to returns obtained, there are in these several trades—

Hands employed.....	1,640
Wages paid weekly	1,310
Capital employed	£277,000

Rossendale is supplied with water by two distinct companies, and with gas by one company. A branch of the Lancashire and Yorkshire Railway threads the valley, having its terminus at Bacup.

Stone abounds in the district, in considerable variety and of excellent quality, being very durable and of a good colour. Prior to 1848 the trade in this article was of very limited extent, being confined chiefly to the immediate district. Since that year, however, the trade has been gradually increasing,

and at the present time it gives employment to a large number of workmen, skilled and otherwise, and absorbs a considerable amount of capital. The stone, which is suitable for all ordinary building and engineering purposes, is obtained from the various quarries in the district, from blocks of many tons weight each, and of almost unlimited length, width and depth for any practical purpose, down to grey slates of half an inch in thickness. Some of the varieties for appearance and durability are not to be surpassed in any district. The export trade is very large, extending to Manchester, Preston, Liverpool, some parts of Yorkshire, Birmingham, London and other places. Some idea of its magnitude may be gathered from the fact, that £2000 and upwards is paid per month for carriage by railway to the various places above enumerated. The rent paid as delphage for some of the quarries amounts to many times what would otherwise be considered the value of the fee-simple of the land, and the latter still remains available, to some extent, for farming and building purposes. As regards the extent of the Stone Trade of Rossendale, the following statement may be taken as being a close approximation to the facts:—

Number of persons employed	780
Amount paid in wages, weekly	£800
Weight of stone of all kinds obtained from the several quarries, weekly, 2000 tons.	
Capital invested	£50,000

Coal abounds in Rossendale almost throughout its entire extent, and has probably been got in quantities, more or less, for about three hundred years. Old workings, regarding which no records are known to exist, are often met with in the mines at present being worked. Some of these are of considerable extent. Rude implements of labour, chiefly wooden shovels, are occasionally met with in these deserted excavations. The supply of coal for the different manufactories in the district is chiefly obtained from the local mines,

which are numerous, employing many hands and a large capital.

Bringing together the more important particulars relating to the Trade of the district, we have the result which is set forth in the subjoined table :—

Table shewing the Number of Hands employed ; the Amount paid in Wages, weekly ; and the Sum of the Capital, sunk and floating, in the Cotton Factories, Woollen Factories, Printing and Dyeing Works, Sizing Works, Reed and Heald Manufactories, Iron Foundries, Millwrights' and Machine Shops, the Stone Trade, and the Water and Gas Works in the Forest of Rossendale, in the year 1867.

Description.	Number of Hands employed.	Amount paid in Wages, weekly.	Capital employed.
		£	£
Cotton	19,500	12,500	2,080,000
Hard Waste, or Shoddy	790	520	85,000
Woollen, Felting, Woollen Printing } and Dyeing	2,000	1,510	355,000
Calico Printing and Dyeing	895	640	210,000
Sizing, Reed, Heald, Shuttle and } Picker Works &c.	465	370	32,000
Foundries, Millwrights' and Machine } Works &c.	280	300	35,000
Stone Trade	780	800	50,000
Water and Gas Works	60	65	176,000
Total	24,770	16,705	3,023,000

Such is the Forest of Rossendale at the present day, and in view of these facts we must be ready to admit the correctness of the opinions of those who, three hundred and sixty years ago, expressed the belief, that “if the Deer were taken out and from the said Forest, that then the same was likely to come and be brought and applied to some good purpose, so as that the commonwealth might be increased thereby.”