Yorkshire—Coast & Moorland Scenes eBook

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CHAPTER I

ACROSS THE MOORS FROM PICKERING TO WHITBY

The ancient stone-built town of Pickering is to a great extent the gateway to the moors of Northeastern Yorkshire, for it stands at the foot of that formerly inaccessible gorge known as Newton Dale, and is the meeting-place of the four great roads running north, south, east, and west, as well as of railways going in the same directions. And this view of the little town is by no means original, for the strategic importance of the position was recognised at least as long ago as the days of the early Edwards, when the castle was built to command the approach to Newton Dale and to be a menace to the whole of the Vale of Pickering.

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The old-time traveller from York to Whitby saw practically nothing of Newton Dale, for the great coach-road bore him towards the east, and then, on climbing the steep hill up to Lockton Low Moor, he went almost due north as far as Sleights. But to-day everyone passes right through the gloomy canyon, for the railway now follows the windings of Pickering Beck, and nursemaids and children on their way to the seaside may gaze at the frowning cliffs which seventy years ago were only known to travellers and a few shepherds. But although this great change has been brought about by railway enterprise, the gorge is still uninhabited, and has lost little of its grandeur; for when the puny train, with its accompanying white cloud, has disappeared round one of the great bluffs, there is nothing left but the two pairs of shining rails, laid for long distances almost on the floor of the ravine. But though there are steep gradients to be climbed, and the engine labours heavily, there is scarcely sufficient time to get any idea of the astonishing scenery from the windows of the train, and you can see nothing of the huge expanses of moorland stretching away from the precipices on either side. So that we, who would learn something of this region, must make the journey on foot; for a bicycle would be an encumbrance when crossing the heather, and there are many places where a horse would be a source of danger. The sides of the valley are closely wooded for the first seven or eight miles north of Pickering, but the surrounding country gradually loses its cultivation, at first gorse and bracken, and then heather, taking the place of the green pastures.

At the village of Newton, perched on high ground far above the dale, we come to the limit of civilization. The sun is nearly setting. The cottages are scattered along the wide roadway and the strip of grass, broken by two large ponds, which just now reflect the pale evening sky. Straight in front, across the green, some ancient barns are thrown up against the golden sunset, and the long perspective of white road, the geese, and some whitewashed gables, stand out from the deepening tones of the grass and trees. A footpath by the inn leads through some dewy meadows to the woods, above Levisham Station in the valley below. At first there are glimpses of the lofty moors on the opposite side of the dale, where the sides of the bluffs are still glowing in the sunset light; but soon the pathway plunges steeply into a close wood, where the foxes are barking, and where the intense darkness is only emphasized by the momentary illumination given by lightning, which now and then flickers in the direction of Lockton Moor. At last the friendly little oil-lamps on the platform at Levisham Station appear just below, and soon the railway is crossed and we are mounting the steep road on the opposite side of the valley. What is left of the waning light shows the rough track over the heather to High Horcum. The huge shoulders of

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the moors are now majestically indistinct, and towards the west the browns, purples, and greens are all merged in one unfathomable blackness. The tremendous silence and the desolation become almost oppressive, but overhead the familiar arrangement of the constellations gives a sense of companionship not to be slighted. In something less than an hour a light glows in the distance, and, although the darkness is now complete, there is no further need to trouble ourselves with the thought of spending the night on the heather. The point of light develops into a lighted window, and we are soon stamping our feet on the hard, smooth road in front of the Saltersgate Inn. The door opens straight into a large stone-flagged room. Everything is redolent of coaching days, for the cheery glow of the fire shows a spotlessly clean floor, old high-backed settles, a gun hooked to one of the beams overhead, quaint chairs and oak stools, and a fox's mask and brush. A gamekeeper is warming himself at the fire, for the evening is chilly, and the firelight falls on his box-cloth gaiters and heavy boots, as we begin to talk of the loneliness and the dangers of the moors, and of the snowstorms in winter, that almost bury the low cottages and blot out all but the boldest landmarks. Soon we are discussing the superstitions which still survive among the simple country-folk, and the dark and lonely wilds we have just left make this a subject of great fascination.

Although we have heard it before, we hear over again with intense interest the story of the witch who brought constant ill-luck to a family in these parts. Their pigs were never free from some form of illness, their cows died, their horses lamed themselves, and even the milk was so far under the spell that on churning-days the butter refused to come unless helped by a crooked sixpence. One day, when as usual they had been churning in vain, instead of resorting to the sixpence, the farmer secreted himself in an outbuilding, and, gun in hand, watched the garden from a small opening. As it was growing dusk he saw a hare coming cautiously through the hedge. He fired instantly, the hare rolled over, dead, and almost as quickly the butter came. That same night they heard that the old woman, whom they had long suspected of bewitching them, had suddenly died at the same time as the hare, and henceforward the farmer and his family prospered.

In the light of morning the isolation of the inn is more apparent than at night. A compact group of stable buildings and barns stands on the opposite side of the road, and there are two or three lonely-looking cottages, but everywhere else the world is purple and brown with ling and heather. The morning sun has just climbed high enough to send a flood of light down the steep hill at the back of the barns, and we can hear the hum of the bees in the heather. In the direction of Levisham is Gallows Dyke, the great purple bluff we passed in the darkness, and a

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few yards off the road makes a sharp double bend to get up Saltersgate Brow, the hill that overlooks the enormous circular bowl of Horcum Hole, where Levisham Beck rises. The farmer whose buildings can be seen down below contrives to paint the bottom of the bowl a bright green, but the ling comes hungrily down on all sides, with evident longings to absorb the scanty cultivation. The Dwarf Cornel, a little mountain-plant which flowers in July, is found in this 'hole.' A few patches have been discovered in the locality, but elsewhere it is not known south of the Cheviots.

Away to the north the road crosses the desolate country like a pale-green ribbon. It passes over Lockton High Moor, climbs to 700 feet at Tom Cross Rigg, and then disappears into the valley of Eller Beck, on Goathland Moor, coming into view again as it climbs steadily up to Sleights Moor, nearly 1,000 feet above the sea. An enormous stretch of moorland spreads itself out towards the west. Near at hand is the precipitous gorge of Upper Newton Dale, backed by Pickering Moor, and beyond are the heights of Northdale Rigg and Rosedale Common, with the blue outlines of Ralph Cross and Danby Head right on the horizon.

The smooth, well-built road, with short grass filling the crevices between the stones, urges us to follow its straight course northwards; but the sternest and most remarkable portion of Upper Newton Dale lies to the left, across the deep heather, and we are tempted aside to reach the lip of the sinuous gorge nearly a mile away to the west, where the railway runs along the marshy and boulder-strewn bottom of a natural cutting 500 feet deep. The cliffs drop down quite perpendicularly for 200 feet, and the remaining distance to the bed of the stream is a rough slope, quite bare in places, and in others densely grown over with trees; but on every side the fortress-like scarps are as stern and bare as any that face the ocean. Looking north or south the gorge seems completely shut in. There is much the same effect when steaming through the Kyles of Bute, for there the ship seems to be going full speed for the shore of an entirely enclosed sea, and here, saving for the tell-tale railway, there seems no way out of the abyss without scaling the perpendicular walls. The rocks are at their finest at Killingnoble Scar, where they take the form of a semicircle on the west side of the railway. The scar was for a very long period famous for the breed of hawks, which were specially watched by the Goathland men for the use of James I., and the hawks were not displaced from their eyrie even by the incursion of the railway into the glen, and only recently became extinct.

Newton Dale Well, at the foot of the scar, used to attract the country people for miles round, to the fair held there on Midsummer Day, when strange ceremonies were performed in order to insure the beneficent influence of the waters. The custom survived until the beginning of last century, but now it is not easy to even find the position of the well. Very few people living in Whitby or Pickering had any idea of the grandeur of the scenery of Newton Dale when the first official journey was made by

railway between the two towns. This was in 1836, but the coaches were drawn by horses on the levels and up the inclines, for it was before the days of the steam-locomotive.

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However, the opening of the line caused great enthusiasm and local excitement, necessitating the services of numbers of policemen to keep the people off the rails. When the separate coaches had been hauled to the highest part of the dale, the horses were detached, and the vehicles were joined up with connecting bars. Then the train was allowed to rush through the pass at what was considered the dangerous speed of twenty miles an hour. For the benefit of those who enjoyed the great pace, the driver allowed the train to go at thirty miles an hour, and then, to show his complete control over the carriages, he applied the brakes and came to a standstill on the steep gradient. But for the existence of the long, narrow ravine right through the heart of these lofty moors, we may reasonably doubt whether Whitby would ever have been joined with York other than by way of the coast-line to Scarborough.

We can cross the line near Eller Beck, and, going over Goathland Moor, explore the wooded sides of Wheeldale Beck and its waterfalls. Mallyan's Spout is the most imposing, having a drop of about 76 feet. The village of Goathland has thrown out skirmishers towards the heather in the form of an ancient-looking but quite modern church, with a low central tower, and a little hotel, stone-built and fitting well into its surroundings. The rest of the village is scattered round a large triangular green, and extends down to the railway, where there is a station named after the village.

The rolling masses of Sleights Moor rise up steeply towards the east, and from the coach-road to Whitby that we deserted at the Saltersgate Inn there is an enormous panorama over Eskdale, Whitby, and the sea.

CHAPTER II

ALONG THE ESK VALLEY

To see the valley of the Esk in its richest garb, one must wait for a spell of fine autumn weather, when a prolonged ramble can be made along the riverside and up on the moorland heights above. For the dense woodlands, which are often merely pretty in midsummer, become astonishingly lovely as the foliage draping the steep hillsides takes on its gorgeous colours, and the gills and becks on the moors send down a plentiful supply of water to fill the dales with the music of rushing streams.

Climbing up the road towards Larpool, we take a last look at quaint old Whitby, spread out before us almost like those wonderful old prints of English towns they loved to publish in the eighteenth century. But although every feature is plainly visible—the church, the abbey, the two piers, the harbour, the old town and the new—the detail is all lost in that soft mellowness of a sunny autumn day. We find an enthusiastic photographer expending plates on this familiar view, which is sold all over the town; but we do not dare to suggest that the prints, however successful, will be painfully

hackneyed, and we go on rejoicing that the questions of stops and exposures need not trouble us, for the world is ablaze with colour.

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Beyond the great red viaduct, whose central piers are washed by the river far below, the road plunges into the golden shade of the woods near Cock Mill, and then comes out by the river's bank down below, with the little village of Ruswarp on the opposite shore. The railway goes over the Esk just below the dam, and does its very best to spoil every view of the great mill built in 1752 by Mr. Nathaniel Cholmley. However, from the road towards Sleights the huge building looks picturesque enough, with the river flowing smoothly over the broad dam fringed by the delicate faded greens and browns of the trees. The mill, with its massive roof and projecting eaves, suggests in a most remarkable fashion one of the huge gate-houses of the Chinese Imperial Palace at Peking.

The road follows close beside the winding river, and all the way to Sleights there are lovely glimpses of the shimmering waters, reflecting the overhanging masses of foliage. The golden yellow of a bush growing at the water's edge will be backed by masses of brown woods that here and there have retained suggestions of green, contrasted with the deep purple tones of their shadowy recesses. These lovely phases of Eskdale scenery are denied to the summer visitor, but there are few who would wish to have the riverside solitudes rudely broken into by the passing of boatloads of holiday-makers. Just before reaching Sleights Bridge we leave the tree-embowered road, and, going through a gate, find a stone-flagged pathway that climbs up the side of the valley with great deliberation, so that we are soon at a great height, with a magnificent sweep of landscape towards the south-west, and the keen air blowing freshly from the great table-land of Egton High Moor.

A little higher, and we are on the road in Aislaby village. The steep climb from the river and railway has kept off those modern influences which have made Sleights and Grosmont architecturally depressing, and thus we find a simple village on the edge of the heather, with picturesque stone cottages and pretty gardens, free from companionship with the painfully ugly modern stone house, with its thin slate roof. The big house of the village stands on the very edge of the descent, surrounded by high trees now swept bare of leaves.

The first time I visited Aislaby I reached the little hamlet when it was nearly dark. Sufficient light, however, remained in the west to show up the large house standing in the midst of the swaying branches. One dim light appeared in the blue-gray mass, and the dead leaves were blown fiercely by the strong gusts of wind. On the other side of the road stood an old gray house, whose appearance that gloomy evening well supported the statement that it was haunted. The classic front appeared behind an imposing gateway approached by a curious flat bridge across a circular pond which had a solid stone edging. The low parapets of the bridge were cut into a strange serpentine form. I gazed at the front of the house, backed by the dim outline of the moor beyond; but, though the place was silent enough, I could hear no strange sounds, and the windows remained black and impassive.

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I left the village in the gathering gloom and was soon out on the heather. Away on the left, but scarcely discernible, was Swart Houe Cross, on Egton Low Moor, and straight in front lay the Skelder Inn. A light gleamed from one of the lower windows, and by it I guided my steps, being determined to partake of tea before turning my steps homeward. I stepped into the little parlour, with its sanded floor, and demanded ‘fat rascals’ and tea. The girl was not surprised at my request, for the hot turf cakes supplied at the inn are known to all the neighbourhood by this unusual name, although they are not particularly fat, and are so extremely palatable that one would gladly call them by a friendlier name.

But though the gloom of an autumn evening emphasizes the loneliness of the inn, it blots out the beautiful views which extend in every direction over dales and woodland, as well as the sea and moors. Whitby shows itself beyond the windmill as a big town dominated by a great rectangular building looking as much like a castle as an hotel, the abbey being less conspicuous from here than from most points of view. Northwards are the dense woods at Mulgrave, the coast as far as Kettleness, and the wide, almost limitless moors in the direction of Guisborough. The road to that ancient town goes straight up the hill past Swart Houe Cross, which forms the horizon in the picture reproduced as the frontispiece of this volume. Up on that high ground you can see right across the valley of the Esk in both directions. The course of the river itself is hidden by the shoulders of Egton Low Moor beneath us, but faint sounds of the shunting of trucks are carried up to the heights. Even when the deep valleys are warmest, and when their atmosphere is most suggestive of a hot-house, these moorland heights rejoice in a keen, dry air, which seems to drive away the slightest sense of fatigue, so easily felt on the lower levels, and to give in its place a vigour that laughs at distance. Up here, too, the whole world seems left to Nature, the levels of cultivation being almost out of sight, and anything under 800 feet seems low. Towards the end of August the heights are capped with purple, although the distant moors, however brilliant they may appear when close at hand, generally assume more delicate shades, fading into grays and blues on the horizon.

But however much the moors may attract us, we started out with the intention of seeing something of Eskdale. We will therefore take a turning out of the Guisborough road, and go down the hill to Egton village, where there is a church with some Norman pillars and arches preserved from the rebuilding craze that despoiled Yorkshire of half its ecclesiastical antiquities. Making our way along the riverside to Grosmont, we come to the enormous heaps above the pits of the now disused iron-mines. This was the birthplace of the Cleveland Ironworks, and Grosmont was at one time more famous than Middlesbrough. The first cargo

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of ironstone was sent from here in 1836, when the Pickering and Whitby Railway was opened. However interesting Grosmont may sound in books, it is a dull place; for the knowledge that the name was originally Grandimont, from the small priory founded about 1200, and named after the abbey in Normandy to which it was attached, does not excite much interest when there is nothing to see but a farmhouse on the site, and the modern place consists of a railway-junction, some deserted mines, and many examples of the modern Yorkshire house.

Everything that Nature can do to make amends for this uninteresting spot is lavishly squandered upon the valley, for wherever man has left things alone there are heavy canopies of foliage, and mossy boulders among the rushing streams; and if you will but take the trouble to climb up to the heather, even the mines are dwarfed into insignificance. We will go up the steep road to the top of Sleights Moor. It is a long stiff climb of nearly 900 feet, but the view is one of the very finest in this country, where wide expanses soon become commonplace. We are sufficiently high to look right across Fylingdales Moor to the sea beyond, a soft haze of pearly blue over the hard, rugged outline of the ling. Away towards the north, too, the landscape for many miles is limited only by the same horizon of sea, so that we seem to be looking at a section of a very large scale contour map of England. Below us on the western side runs the Mirk Esk, draining the heights upon which we stand as well as Egton High Moor and Wheeldale Moor. The confluence with the Esk at Grosmont is lost in a haze of smoke and a confusion of roofs and railway-lines; and the course of the larger river in the direction of Glaisdale is also hidden behind the steep slopes of Egton High Moor. Towards the south we gaze over a vast desolation, crossed by the coach-road to York as it rises and falls over the swells of the heather. The queer isolated cone of Blakey Topping and the summit of Gallows Dyke, close to Saltersgate, appear above the distant ridges.

The route of the great Roman road from the South to Dunsley Bay can also be seen from these heights. It passes straight through Cawthorn Camp, on the ridge to the west of the village of Newton, and then runs along within a few yards of the by-road from Picketing to Egton. It crosses Wheeldale Beck, and skirts the ancient dyke round July or Julian Park, at one time a hunting-seat of the great De Mauley family. The road is about 12 feet wide, and is now deep in heather; but it is slightly raised above the general level of the ground, and can therefore be followed fairly easily where it has not been taken up to build walls for enclosures. Of greater antiquity, but much more easily discovered, are the bride stones close at hand on Sleights Moor. Several of the stones have fallen, but three of them are still standing erect, the tallest being 7 feet high. It is not easy to discover any particular form from the standing and recumbent stones, for they neither make a circle nor do they seem to be directed to any particular point of the compass; but it is quite possible that these monoliths were put up by Early Man as a means of recording the seasons, in somewhat the same manner as Stonehenge is an example of the orientated temple of Neolithic times.

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If we go down into the valley beneath us by a road bearing south-west, we shall find ourselves at Beck Hole, where there is a pretty group of stone cottages, backed by some tall firs. The Eller Beck is crossed by a stone bridge close to its confluence with the Mirk Esk. Above the bridge, a footpath among the huge boulders winds its way by the side of the rushing beck to Thomasin Foss, where the little river falls in two or three broad silver bands into a considerable pool. Great masses of overhanging rock, shaded by a leafy roof, shut in the brimming waters.

It is not difficult to find the way from Beck Hole to the Roman camp on the hillside towards Egton Bridge. The Roman road from Cawthorn goes right through it, but beyond this it is not easy to trace, although fragments have been discovered as far as Aislaby, all pointing to Dunsley or Sandsend Bay. Round the shoulder of the hill we come down again to the deeply-wooded valley of the Esk. No river can be seen, but when we enter the shade of the trees the sound of many waters fills the air. What was once a thick green roof is now thin and yellow, and under our feet is a yielding carpet of soft brown and orange leaves. Rare and luxuriant mosses grow at the foot of the trees, on dead wood, and on the damp stones, and everywhere the rich woodland scent of decay meets the nostrils. In the midst of all these evidences of rampant natural conditions we come to Glaisdale End, where a graceful stone bridge of a single arch stands over the rushing stream. The initials of the builder and the date appear on the eastern side of what is now known as the Beggar's Bridge. It was formerly called Firris Bridge, after the builder, but the popular interest in the story of its origin seems to have killed the old name. If you ask anyone in Whitby to mention some of the sights of the neighbourhood, he will probably head his list with the Beggar's Bridge, but why this is so I cannot imagine. The woods are very beautiful, but this is a country full of the loveliest dales, and the presence of this single-arched bridge does not seem sufficient to have attracted so much popularity. I can only attribute it to the love interest associated with the beggar. He was, we may imagine, the Alderman Thomas Firris who, as a penniless youth, came to bid farewell to his betrothed, who lived somewhere on the opposite side of the river. Finding the stream impassable, he is said to have determined that if he came back from his travels as a rich man he would put up a bridge on the spot he had been prevented from crossing. It is not a very remarkable story, even if it be true, but it has given the bridge a fame scarcely proportionate to its merits.

CHAPTER III

THE COAST FROM WHITBY TO REDCAR

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Along the three miles of sand running northwards from Whitby at the foot of low alluvial cliffs, I have seen some of the finest sea-pictures on this part of the coast. But although I have seen beautiful effects at all times of the day, those that I remember more than any others are the early mornings, when the sun was still low in the heavens, when, standing on that fine stretch of yellow sand, one seemed to breathe an atmosphere so pure, and to gaze at a sky so transparent, that some of those undefined longings for surroundings that have never been realized were instinctively uppermost in the mind. It is, I imagine, that vague recognition of perfection which has its effect on even superficial minds when impressed with beautiful scenery, for to what other cause can be attributed the remark one hears, that such scenes ‘make one feel good’?

Heavy waves, overlapping one another in their fruitless bombardment of the smooth shelving sand, are filling the air with a ceaseless thunder. The sun, shining from a sky of burnished gold, throws into silhouette the twin lighthouses at the entrance to Whitby Harbour, and turns the foaming wave-tops into a dazzling white, accentuated by the long shadows of early day. Away to the north-west is Sandsend Ness, a bold headland full of purple and blue shadows, and straight out to sea, across the white-capped waves, are two tramp steamers, making, no doubt, for South Shields or some port where a cargo of coal can be picked up. They are plunging heavily, and every moment their bows seem to go down too far to recover.

On mornings when the sea is quieter there are few who can resist the desire to plunge into the blue waters, for at seven o’clock the shore is so entirely deserted that one seems to be bathing from some primeval shore where no other forms of life may be expected than some giant crustaceans. This thought, perhaps, prompted the painful sensations I allowed to prey upon me one night when I was walking along this particular piece of shore from Whitby. I had decided to save time over the road to Sandsend by getting on to the beach at Upgang, where the lifeboat-house stands, by the entrance to a small beck. So dark was the night that I could scarcely be sure that I had not lost my way, until I had carefully felt the walls of the boat-house. Then I stepped cautiously on to the sand, which I discovered as soon as my feet began sinking at every step.

The harbour lights of Whitby were bright enough, but in the other direction I could be sure of nothing. At first I seemed to have made a mistake as to the state of the tide, for there appeared to be a whiteness nearly up to the base of the cliffs; but this proved to be the suffused glow from the lighthouses. Rain had been falling heavily for the last few days, and had produced so many wide streams across the sand that my knowledge of the usual ones merely hampered me. At first I began stepping carefully over large black hollows in the sand, and then a great

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black mark would show itself, which, offering no resistance to my stick as I drew it across its surface, I could only imagine to be caused by a flood of ink poured upon the beach by some horrible squid. My musings on whether sea-monsters did ever disport themselves on the shore under the cover of sufficiently dark nights would be broken into by discovering that I had plunged into a stream of undiscoverable dimensions, whose existence only revealed itself by the splash of my boots. Retreating cautiously, I would take a run, and then a terrific leap into the darkness, sometimes finding myself on firm dry sand, and as frequently in the water.

I had decided that I should probably not reach Sandsend until daylight, when a red lamp near the railway-bridge shone out as a beacon, and I realized that I would soon be safe from the tentacles of sea-monsters.

When I awoke next morning, I dashed out on to the beach, and commenced to walk rapidly in the direction of Whitby, in the hope that the tide had left some of those black stains still showing. I wanted, also, to examine some of the queer ridges I had so often stepped over, and some of the rivers I had leapt. The rivers were there wide enough in places, but nothing in the way of a ridge or any signs of those inky patches could I discern. Careful examination showed, however, that here and there the smooth shore was covered with sand of a rather reddish hue, quite unworthy of remark in daylight. The foolishness of my apprehensions seems apparent, but nevertheless I urge everyone to choose a moonlit night and a companion of some sort for traversing these three miles after sunset.

The two little becks finding their outlet at East Row and Sandsend are lovely to-day; but their beauty must have been much more apparent before the North-Eastern Railway put their black lattice girder bridges across the mouth of each valley. But now that familiarity with these bridges, which are of the same pattern across every wooded ravine up the coast-line to Redcar, has blunted my impressions, I can think of the picturesqueness of East Row without remembering the railway. It was in this glen, where Lord Normanby's lovely woods make a background for the pretty tiled cottages, the mill, and the old stone bridge, which make up East Row, that the Saxons chose a home for their god Thor. [Since this was written one or two new houses have been allowed to mar the simplicity of the valley.—G. H.] Here they built some rude form of temple, afterwards, it seems, converted into a hermitage. This was how the spot obtained the name Thordisa, a name it retained down to 1620, when the requirements of workmen from the newly-started alum-works at Sandsend led to building operations by the side of the stream. The cottages which arose became known afterwards as East Row.

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A very little way inland is the village of Dunsley, which may have been in existence in Roman times, for Ptolemy mentions Dunus Sinus as a bay frequently used by the Romans as a landing-place. The foundations of some ancient building can easily be traced in the rough grass at the village cross-roads, now overlooked by a new stone house. But whatever surprises Dunsley may have in store for those who choose to dig in the likely places, the hamlet need not keep one long, for on either hand there is a choice of breezy moorland or the astonishing beauties of Mulgrave Woods. Before I knew this part of Yorkshire, and had merely read of the woods as a sight to be visited from Whitby, I was prepared for something at least as hackneyed as Hayburn Wyke. I was prepared for direction-boards and artificial helps to the charms of certain aspects of the streams. I certainly never anticipated that I should one day sigh for a direction-board in this forest.

It was on my second visit to the woods that I determined to find a particularly dramatic portion of one of the streams. My first ramble had been in summer. I had been with one who knew the paths well, but now it was late autumn and I was alone. I explored the paths for hours, and traversed long glades ablaze with red and gold. I peered down through the yellow leaves to the rushing streams below, where I could see the great moss-grown boulders choking the narrow channels. But this particular spot had gone. I was almost in despair, when two labourers by great luck happened to come along one of the tracks. With their help I found the place I was searching for, and the result of the time spent there is given in one of the illustrations to this chapter. Go where you will in Yorkshire, you will find no more fascinating woodland scenery than this. From the broken walls and towers of the old Norman castle the views over the ravines on either hand—for the castle stands on a lofty promontory in a sea of foliage—are entrancing; and after seeing the astoundingly brilliant colours with which autumn paints these trees, there is a tendency to find the ordinary woodland commonplace. The narrowest and deepest gorge is hundreds of feet deep in the shale. East Row Beck drops into this canyon in the form of a waterfall at the upper end, and then almost disappears among the enormous rocks strewn along its circumscribed course. The humid, hothouse atmosphere down here encourages the growth of many of the rarer mosses, which entirely cover all but the newly-fallen rocks.

We can leave the woods by a path leading near Lord Normanby's modern castle, and come out on to the road close to Lythe Church, where a great view of sea and land is spread out towards the south. The long curving line of white marks the limits of the tide as far as the entrance to Whitby Harbour. The abbey stands out in its loneliness as of yore, and beyond it are the black-looking, precipitous cliffs ending at Saltwick Nab. Lythe Church, standing

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in its wind-swept graveyard full of blackened tombstones, need not keep us, for, although its much-modernized exterior is simple and ancient-looking, the interior is devoid of any interest. It is the same tale at nearly every village in this district, and to those who are able to grow enthusiastic in antiquarian matters some parts of the county are disappointing. In East Anglia and the southern counties even the smallest hamlets have often a good church, with a conspicuous tower or spire; but in how many villages in this riding do you find no church at all, as in the case of Staithes and Runswick? Many of the old churches of Yorkshire were in a state of great dilapidation at the beginning of last century, and a great effort having been initiated by the then Archbishop, a fund was instituted to help the various parishes to restore their buildings. It was a period when architecture was at a low ebb, and the desire to sweep away antiquity was certainly strong, for those churches not rebuilt from the ground were so hacked and renovated that their interest and picturesqueness has vanished. The churches at Pickering, Middleton, Lastingham, and Kirkdale must, however, be pointed out as priceless exceptions.

The road drops down a tremendous hill into Sandsend, where they talk of going ‘up t’ bonk’ to Lythe Church. A little chapel of ease in the village accommodates the old and delicate folk, but the youth and the generally able-bodied of Sandsend must climb the hill every Sunday. The beck forms an island in the village, and the old stone cottages, bright with new paint and neatly-trained creepers, stand in their gardens on either side of the valley in the most picturesque fashion.

The walk along the rocky shore to Kettleness is dangerous unless the tide is carefully watched, and the road inland through Lythe village is not particularly interesting, so that one is tempted to use the railway, which cuts right through the intervening high ground by means of two tunnels. The first one is a mile long, and somewhere near the centre has a passage out to the cliffs, so that even if both ends of the tunnel collapsed there would be a way of escape. But this is small comfort when travelling from Kettleness, for the down gradient towards Sandsend is very steep, and in the darkness of the tunnel the train gets up a tremendous speed, bursting into the open just where a precipitous drop into the sea could be most easily accomplished.

The station at Kettleness is on the top of the huge cliffs, and to reach the shore one must climb down a zigzag path. It is a broad and solid pathway until halfway down, where it assumes the character of a goat-track, being a mere treading down of the loose shale of which the enormous cliff is formed. The sliding down of the crumbling rock constantly carries away the path, but a little spade-work soon makes the track firm again. This portion of the cliff has something of a history, for one night in

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1829 the inhabitants of many of the cottages originally forming the village of Kettleness were warned of impending danger by subterranean noises. Fearing a subsidence of the cliff, they betook themselves to a small schooner lying in the bay. This wise move had not long been accomplished, when a huge section of the ground occupied by the cottages slid down the great cliff and the next morning there was little to be seen but a sloping mound of lias shale at the foot of the precipice. The villagers recovered some of their property by digging, and some pieces of broken crockery from one of the cottages are still to be seen on the shore near the ferryman's hut, where the path joins the shore.

This sandy beach, lapped by the blue waves of Runswick Bay, is one of the finest spots on the rocky coast-line of Yorkshire. A trickling waterfall drops perpendicularly down the blackish rocks from a considerable height, while above it are the towering cliffs of shale, perfectly bare in one direction, and clothed with grass and bracken in another. At the foot of the rocks a layer of jet appears a few inches above the sand.

You look northwards across the sunlit sea to the rocky heights hiding Port Mulgrave and Staithes, and on the further side of the bay you see tiny Runswick's red roofs, one above the other, on the face of the cliff. Here it is always cool and pleasant in the hottest weather, and from the broad shadows cast by the precipices above one can revel in the sunny land and sea-scapes without that fishy odour so unavoidable in the villages. When the sun is beginning to climb down the sky in the direction of Hinderwell, and everything is bathed in a glorious golden light, the ferryman will row you across the bay to Runswick, but a scramble over the rocks on the beach will be repaid by a closer view of the now half-filled-up Hob Hole. The fisher-folk believed this cave to be the home of a kindly-disposed fairy or hob, who seems to have been one of the slow-dying inhabitants of the world of mythology implicitly believed in by the Saxons. And these beliefs died so hard in these lonely Yorkshire villages that until recent times a mother would carry her child suffering from whooping-cough along the beach to the mouth of the cave. There she would call in a loud voice, 'Hob-hole Hob! my bairn's gotten t'kink cough. Tak't off, tak't off.' One can see the child's parents gazing fearfully into the black depths of the cavern, penetrating the cliff for 70 feet, and finally turning back to the village in the full belief that the hob would stay the disease.

The steep paths and flights of roughly-built steps that wind above and below the cottages are the only means of getting about in Runswick. The butcher's cart every Saturday penetrates into the centre of the village by the rough track which is all that is left of the good firm road from Hinderwell after it has climbed down the cliff. To this central position, close to the post-box, the householders come to buy their supply of meat for Sunday, having their purchases weighed on scales placed on the flap at the back of the cart. While the butcher is doing his thriving trade the postman arrives to collect letters from the pillar-box, Placing a small horn to his lips, he blows a blast to

warn the villagers that the post is going, and, having waited for the last letter, climbs slowly up the steep pathway to Hinderwell.

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Halfway up to the top he pauses and looks over the fruit-trees and the tiles and chimney-pots below him, to the bright blue waters of the bay, with Kettleness beyond, now all pink and red in the golden light of late afternoon. This scene is more suggestive of the Mediterranean than Yorkshire, for the blueness of the sea seems almost unnatural, and the golden greens of the pretty little gardens among the houses seem perhaps a trifle theatrical; but the fisher-folk play their parts too well, and there is nothing make-believe about the delicious bread-and-butter and the newly-baked cakes which accompany the tea awaiting us in a spotlessly clean cottage close by.

The same form of disaster which destroyed Kettleness village caused the complete ruin of Runswick in 1666, for one night, when some of the fisher-folk were holding a wake over a corpse, they had unmistakable warnings of an approaching landslip. The alarm was given, and the villagers, hurriedly leaving their cottages, saw the whole place slide downwards and become a mass of ruins. No lives were lost, but, as only one house remained standing, the poor fishermen were only saved from destitution by the sums of money collected for their relief.

Architecturally speaking, Hinderwell is a depressing village, and there is little to remember about the place except an extraordinary block of two or three shops, suitable only for a business street in a big city, but dumped right into the middle of this village of low cottages. The church is modern enough to be uninteresting, but in the graveyard St. Hilda's Well, from which the name Hinderwell is a corruption, may still be seen.

In 1603 there was a sudden and terrible outbreak of plague in the village. It only lasted from September 1 to November 10, but in that short time forty-nine people died. It seems that the infection was brought by some men from a 'Turkey ship' that had been stranded on the coast, but, strangely enough, the disease does not appear to have been carried into the other villages in the neighbourhood.

Scarcely two miles from Hinderwell is the fishing-hamlet of Staithes, wedged into the side of a deep and exceedingly picturesque beck. Here—and it is the same at Runswick—one is obliged to walk warily during the painter's season, for fear of either obstructing the view of the man behind the easel you have just passed, or out of regard for the feelings of some girls just in front. There are often no more chances of standing still in Staithes than may be enjoyed on a popular golf-links on a fine Saturday afternoon. These folk at Staithes do not disturb one with cries of 'Fore!' but with that blank Chinaman's stare which comes to anyone who paints in public.

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The average artist is a being who is quite unable to recognise architectural merit. He sees everything to please him if the background of his group be sufficiently tumble-down and derelict. If this be incorrect, how could such swarms of artistic folk paint and actually lodge in Staithes? The steep road leading past the station drops down into the village, giving a glimpse of the beck crossed by its ramshackle wooden foot-bridge—the view one has been prepared for by guide-books and picture postcards. Lower down you enter the village street. Here the smell of fish comes out to greet you, and one would forgive the place this overflowing welcome if one were not so shocked at the dismal aspect of the houses on either side of the way. Many are of comparatively recent origin, others are quite new, and a few—a very few—are old; but none have any architectural pretensions or any claims to picturesqueness, and only a few have the neat and respectable look one is accustomed to expect after seeing Robin Hood's Bay.

Staithes had filled me with so much pleasant expectancy that my first walk down this street of dirty, ugly houses had brought me into a querulous frame of mind, and I wondered irritably why the women should all wear lilac-coloured bonnets, when a choice of colour is not difficult as far as calico is concerned. Those women who were in mourning had dyed theirs black, and these assorted well with the colour of the stone of many of the houses.

I hurried down on to the little fish-wharf—a wooden structure facing the sea—hoping to find something more cheering in the view of the little bay, with its bold cliffs, and the busy scene where the cobles were drawn up on the shingle. Here my spirits revived, and I began to find excuses for the painters. The little wharf, in a bad state of repair, like most things in the place, was occupied by groups of stalwart fisher-folk, men and women.

The men were for the most part watching their women-folk at work. They were also to an astonishing extent mere spectators in the arduous work of hauling the cobles one by one on to the steep bank of shingle. A tackle hooked to one of the baulks of timber forming the staith was being hauled at by five women and two men! Two others were in a listless fashion leaning their shoulders against the boat itself. With the last 'Heave-ho!' at the shortened tackle the women laid hold of the nets, and with casual male assistance laid them out on the shingle, removed any fragments of fish, and generally prepared them for stowing in the boat again.

It is evidently an accepted state of things at Staithes that the work of putting out to sea and the actual catching of the fish is sufficient for the men-folk, for the feminine population do their arduous tasks with a methodical matter-of-factness which surprises only the stranger. I was particularly struck on one occasion with the sight of a good-looking and very neatly dressed young fishwife who was engaged

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in that very necessary but exceedingly unpleasant task of cutting open fish and removing the perishable portions. With unerring precision the sharp knife was plunged into each cod or haddock, and the fish was in its marketable condition in shorter time than one can write. A little boy plunged them into a pail of ruddy-looking water, and from thence into the regulation fish box or basket that finds its way to the Metropolis.

A change has come over the inhabitants of Staithes since 1846, when Mr. Ord describes the fishermen as 'exceedingly civil and courteous to strangers, and altogether free from that low, grasping knavery peculiar to the larger class of fishing-towns.' Without wishing to be unreasonably hard on Staithes, I am inclined to believe that this character is infinitely better than these folk deserve, and even when Mr. Ord wrote of the place I have reason to doubt the civility shown by them to strangers. It is, according to some who have known Staithes for a long while, less than fifty years ago that the fisher-folk were hostile to a stranger on very small provocation, and only the entirely inoffensive could expect to sojourn in the village without being a target for stones. The incursion of the artistic hordes has been a great factor in the demoralization of the village, for who would not be mercenary when besought at all hours of the day to stand before a canvas or a camera? Thus, the harmless stranger who strays on to the staith with a camera is obliged to pay for 'an afternoon's 'baccy' if he want an opportunity to obtain more than a snapshot of a picturesque group. He may try to capture a lonely old fisherman by asking if he would mind standing still for 'just one second,' but the old fellow will move away instantly unless his demand for payment be readily complied with.

No doubt many of the superstitions of Staithes people have languished or died out in recent years, and among these may be included a particularly primitive custom when the catches of fish had been unusually small. Bad luck of this sort could only be the work of some evil influence, and to break the spell a sheep's heart had to be procured, into which many pins were stuck. The heart was then burnt in a bonfire on the beach, in the presence of the fishermen, who danced round the flames.

In happy contrast to these heathenish practices was the resolution entered into and signed by the fishermen of Staithes, in August, 1835, binding themselves 'on no account whatever' to follow their calling on Sundays, 'nor to go out with our boats or cobbles to sea, either on the Saturday or Sunday evenings.' They also agreed to forfeit ten shillings for every offence against the resolution, and the fund accumulated in this way, and by other means, was administered for the benefit of aged couples and widows and orphans.

The men of Staithes are known up and down the east coast of Great Britain as some of the very finest types of fishermen. Their cobles, which vary in size and colour, are uniform in design and the brilliance of their paint. Brick red, emerald green, pungent

blue and white, are the most favoured colours, but orange, pink, yellow, and many others, are to be seen.

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Not only are fish of the present age in evidence at Staithes, but nowhere along this coast can one find better examples of those of the Jurassic period. When the tide has exposed the scaur which runs out from Colburn Nab, at the mouth of the beck, a one can examine masses of recently fallen rocks, the new faces of which are almost invariably covered with ammonites or clusters of fossil bivalves. The only hindrance to a close examination of these new falls from the cliffs is the serious danger of another fall occurring at the same spot. The fisher-folk are very kind in pointing out this peril to ardent geologists and those of a less scientific outlook, who merely enjoy the exercise of scrambling over great masses of rock. After having been warned that most of the face of the cliff above is 'qualified' to come down at any moment, there is a strong inclination to betake one's self to a safe distance, where, unfortunately, the wear and tear of the waves have in most cases so battered the traces of early marine life that there is little to attack with the hammer to compare with what can be seen in the new falls. The scaur also presents an interesting feature in its round ironstone nodules, half embedded in the smooth rocky floor.

Looking northwards there is a grand piece of coast scenery. The masses of Boulby Cliffs, rising 660 feet from the sea, are the highest on the Yorkshire coast. The waves break all round the rocky scaur, and fill the air with their thunder, while the strong wind blows the spray into beards which stream backwards from the incoming crests.

The upper course of Staithes Beck consists of two streams, flowing through deep, richly-wooded ravines. They follow parallel courses very close to one another for three or four miles, but their sources extend from Lealholm Moor to Wapley Moor. Kilton Beck runs through another lovely valley densely clothed in trees, and full of the richest woodland scenery. It becomes more open in the neighbourhood of Loftus, and from thence to the sea at Skinningrove the valley is green and open to the heavens. Loftus is on the borders of the Cleveland mining district, and it is for this reason that the town has grown to a considerable size. But although the miners' new cottages are unpicturesque, and the church only dates from 1811, the situation is pretty, owing to the profusion of trees among the houses. Skinningrove has railway-sidings and branch-lines running down to it, and on the hill above the cottages stands a cluster of blast-furnaces. In daylight they are merely ugly, but at night, with tongues of flame, they speak of the potency of labour. I can still see that strange silhouette of steel cylinders and connecting girders against a blue-black sky, with silent masses of flame leaping into the heavens.

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It was long before iron-ore was smelted here, before even the old alum-works had been started, that Skinningrove attained to some sort of fame through a wonderful visit, as strange as any of those recounted by Mr. Wells. It was in the year 1535—for the event is most carefully recorded in a manuscript of the period—that some fishermen of Skinningrove caught a Sea Man. This was such an astounding fact to record that the writer of the old manuscript explains that 'old men that would be loath to have their credyt crackt by a tale of a stale date, report confidently that ... a *sea-man* was taken by the fishers.' They took him up to an old disused house, and kept him there for many weeks, feeding him on raw fish, because he persistently refused the other sorts of food offered him. To the people who flocked from far and near to visit him he was very courteous, and he seems to have been particularly pleased with any 'fayre maydes' who visited him, for he would gaze at them with a very earnest countenance, 'as if his phlegmaticke breaste had been touched with a sparke of love.' The Sea Man was so well behaved that the fisher-folk began to feel sufficiently sure of his desire to live with them to cease to keep watch on his movements. 'One day,' we are told, 'he prively stoale out of Doores, and ere he coulde be overtaken recovered the sea, whereinto he plunged himself; yet as one that woulde not unmanerly depart without taking of his leave, from the mydle upwardes he raysed his shoulders often above the waves, and makinge signes of acknowledgeing his good enterteinment to such as beheld him on the shore, as they interpreted yt;—after a pretty while he dived downe and appeared no more.'

This strangely detailed account says that instead of a voice the Sea Man 'skreaked,' but this is of small interest compared to whether he had a tail or any fish-like attributes. The fact that he escaped would suggest the presence of legs, but the historian is silent on this all-important matter.

The lofty coast-line we have followed all the way from Sandsend terminates abruptly at Huntcliff Nab, the great promontory which is familiar to visitors to Saltburn. Low alluvial cliffs take the place of the rocky precipices, and the coast becomes flatter and flatter as you approach Redcar and the marshy country at the mouth of the Tees. The original Saltburn, consisting of a row of quaint fishermen's cottages, still stands entirely alone, facing the sea on the Huntcliff side of the beck, and from the wide, smooth sands there is little of modern Saltburn to be seen besides the pier. For the rectangular streets and blocks of houses have been wisely placed some distance from the edge of the grassy cliffs, leaving the sea-front quite unspoiled. It would, perhaps, be well to own that I have never seen Saltburn during the summer season, and for this reason I may think better of the resort than if my visit had been in midsummer. It was during October. The

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sun was shining brightly, and a strong wind was blowing off the land. The wide, new-looking streets were spotlessly clean, and in most of them there was no sign of life at all. It was the same on the broad sweep of sands, for when I commenced a drawing on the cliffs the only living creatures I could see were two small dogs. About noon a girls' school was let loose upon the sands, and for half an hour a furious game of hockey was fought. Then I was left alone again, with the great expanse of sea, the yellow margin of sand, and the reddish-brown cliffs, all beneath the wind-swept sky.

The elaborately-laid-out gardens on the steep banks of Skelton Beck are the pride and joy of Saltburn, for they offer a pleasant contrast to the bare slopes on the Huntcliff side and the flat country towards Kirkleatham. But in this seemingly harmless retreat there used to be heard horrible groanings, and I have no evidence to satisfy me that they have altogether ceased. For in this matter-of-fact age such a story would not be listened to, and thus those who hear the sounds may be afraid to speak of them. The groanings were heard, they say, 'when all wyndes are whiste and the sea restes unmoved as a standing poole.' At times they were so loud as to be heard at least six miles inland, and the fishermen feared to put out to sea, believing that the ocean was 'as a greedy Beaste raginge for Hunger, desyers to be satisfyed with men's carcases.' There were also at that time certain rocks towards Huntcliff Nab, left bare at low-tide, where 'Seales in greate Heardes like Swine' were to be seen basking in the sun. 'For their better scuritye,' says the old writer, 'they put in use a kind of military discipline, warily preparing against a soddaine surprize, for on the outermost Rocke one great Seale or more keepes sentinell, which upon the first inklinge of any danger, giveth the Alarme to the rest by throweing of Stones, or making a noise in the water, when he tumbles down from the Rocke, the rest immediately doe the like, insomuch that yt is very hard to overtake them by cunning.'

In 1842 Redcar was a mere village, though more apparent on the map than Saltburn; but, like its neighbour, it has grown into a great watering-place, having developed two piers, a long esplanade other features, which I am glad to leave to those for whom they were made, and betake myself to the more romantic spots so plentiful in this broad county.

CHAPTER IV

THE COAST FROM WHITBY TO SCARBOROUGH

Although it is only six miles as the crow flies from Whitby to Robin Hood's Bay, the exertion required to walk there along the top of the cliffs is equal to quite double that distance, for there are so many gullies to be climbed into and crawled out of that the

measured distance is considerably increased. It is well to remember this, for otherwise the scenery of the last mile or two may not seem as fine as the first stages.

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As soon as the abbey and the jet-sellers are left behind, you pass a farm, and come out on a great expanse of close-growing smooth turf, where the whole world seems to be made up of grass and sky. The footpath goes close to the edge of the cliff; in some places it has gone too close, and has disappeared altogether. But these diversions can be avoided without spoiling the magnificent glimpses of the rock-strewn beach nearly 200 feet below. From above Saltwick Bay there is a grand view across the level grass to Whitby Abbey, standing out alone on the green horizon. Down below, Saltwick Nab runs out a bare black arm into the sea, which even in the calmest weather angrily foams along the windward side. Beyond the sturdy lighthouse that shows itself a dazzling white against the hot blue of the heavens commence the innumerable gullies. Each one has its trickling stream, and bushes and low trees grow to the limits of the shelter afforded by the ravines; but in the open there is nothing higher than the waving corn or the stone walls dividing the pastures—a silent testimony to the power of the north-east wind. The village of Hawsker, with its massive though modern church, can be seen across the fields towards the west, but it does not offer sufficient attractions to divert you from the cliffs, unless you have a desire to see in one or two of the fields, gateways and rubbing-posts formed of whales' jaws, suggestive of the days when Whitby carried on a thriving trade with the great cetaceans. To enjoy this magnificent coast scenery, there must be plenty of time to linger in those places where it seems impossible not to fling yourself on the long brown grass and listen to the droning of insects and the sound of the waves down below. At certain times of the day the most striking colours are seen among the sunlit rocks, and the boldness of the outlines of overhanging strata and great projecting shoulders are a continual surprise.

After rounding the North Cheek, the whole of Robin Hood's Bay is suddenly laid before you. I well remember my first view of the wide sweep of sea, which lay like a blue carpet edged with white, and the high escarpments of rock that were in deep purple shade, except where the afternoon sun turned them into the brightest greens and umbers. Three miles away, but seemingly very much closer, was the bold headland of the Peak, and more inland was Stoupe Brow, with Robin Hood's Butts on the hill-top. The fable connected with the outlaw is scarcely worth repeating, but on the site of these butts urns have been dug up, and are now to be found in Scarborough Museum. The Bay Town is hidden away in a most astonishing fashion, for, until you have almost reached the two bastions which guard the way up from the beach, there is nothing to be seen of the charming old place. If you approach by the road past the railway-station it is the same, for only garishly new hotels and villas are to be seen on the high ground, and not a vestige of the fishing-town can be discovered. But the road to the bay at last begins to drop down very steeply, and the first old roofs appear. The path at the side of the road develops into a very long series of steps, and in a few minutes the narrow street, flanked by very tall houses, has swallowed you up.

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Everything is very clean and orderly, and, although most of the houses are very old, they are generally in a good state of repair, exhibiting in every case the seaman's love of fresh paint. Thus, the dark and worn stone walls have bright eyes in their newly-painted doors and windows. Over their doorsteps the fishermen's wives are quite fastidious, and you seldom see a mark on the ochre-coloured hearthstone with which the women love to brighten the worn stones. Even the scrapers are sleek with blacklead, and it is not easy to find a window without spotlessly clean curtains. The little coastguard station by the opening on to the shore has difficulty in showing itself superior to the rest in these essential matters of smartness. However, the coastguards glory in a little stone pathway protected by a low wall in front of their building. On this narrow quarter-deck the men love to walk to and fro, just as though they were afloat and were limited to this space for exercise. At high-tide the sea comes halfway up the steep opening between the coastguards' quarters and the inn which is built on another bastion, and in rough weather the waves break hungrily on to the strong stone walls, for the bay is entirely open to the full force of gales from the east or north-east. All the way from Scarborough to Whitby the coast offers no shelter of any sort in heavy weather, and many vessels have been lost on the rocks. On one occasion a small sailing-ship was driven right into this bay at high-tide, and the bowsprit smashed into a window of the little hotel that occupied the place of the present one.

With angry seas periodically demolishing the outermost houses, it seems almost unaccountable that the little town should have persisted in clinging so tenaciously to the high-water mark; but there were probably two paramount reasons for this. The deep gully was to a great extent protected from the force of the winds, and, as it was soon quite brimful of houses, every inch of space was valuable; then, smuggling was freely practised along the coast, and the more the houses were wedged together, the more opportunities for secret hiding-places would be afforded. The whole town has a consciously guilty look in its evident desire to conceal itself; and the steep narrow streets, the curious passages where it is scarcely possible for two people to pass, and the little courts which look like culs-de-sac but have a hidden flight of steps leading down to another passage, seem to be purposely intricate and confusing. For I can imagine a revenue cutter chasing a boat into Robin Hood's Bay, and I can see the smugglers hastily landing on the beach and making for the town, followed by the Excise officers, who are as unable to trace the men as though they had been chasing rabbits in a warren. The stream that made this retreat for the fishing-town is now scarcely more than a drain when it reaches the houses, for, after passing along the foot of a great perpendicular mass of shale, it rushes into a tunnel, and only appears again on the shore.

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It is strange that there should be so little information as to the associations of Robin Hood with this fishing-village. The stories of his shooting an arrow to determine where he should make his headquarters sound improbable, although his keeping one or two small ships in the bay ready for making his escape if suddenly attacked seems a rational precaution, and if only there were a little more evidence outside the local traditions to go upon, it would be pleasant to let the imagination play upon the wild life led by the outlawed Earl of Huntingdon in this then inaccessible coast region.

The railway southwards takes a curve inland, and, after winding in and out to make the best of the contour of the hills, the train finally steams very heavily and slowly into Ravenscar Station, right over the Peak and 630 feet above the sea. On the way you get glimpses of the moors inland, and grand views over the curving bay. There is a station named Fyling Hall, after Sir Hugh Cholmley's old house, halfway to Ravenscar. It was about the year 1625 that Sir Hugh to a great extent rebuilt Fyling Hall, which is still standing; but he came in with his family before the plaster on the walls was thoroughly dry, and the household seems to have suffered in health on this account. Shortly afterwards Sir Hugh lost his eldest son Richard, who was only five years old, and this great trouble decided him to move to Whitby; for in 1629 he sold Fyling Hall to Sir John Hotham, and took up his residence in the Abbey House at Whitby.

Raven Hall, the large house conspicuously perched on the heights above the Peak, is now converted into an hotel. There is a wonderful view from the castellated terraces, which in the distance suggest the remains of some ruined fortress. At the present time there is nothing to be seen older than the house whose foundations were dug in 1774. While the building operations were in progress, however, a Roman stone, now in Whitby Museum, was unearthed. The inscription has been translated: 'Justinian, governor of the province, and Vindician, general of the forces of Upper Britain, for the second time, with the younger provincial soldiers built this fort, the manager of public works giving his assistance.' There is therefore ample evidence for believing that this commanding height was used by the Romans as a military post, although subsequently there were no further attempts to fortify the place, Scarborough, so much more easily defensible, being chosen instead. A rather pathetic attempt to foster the establishment of a watering-place has, however, been lately put on foot, but beyond some elaborately prepared roads and two or three isolated blocks of houses, there is fortunately little response to this artificial cultivation of a summer resort on the bare hill-top.

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Following this lofty coast southwards, you reach Hayburn Wyke, where a stream drops perpendicularly over some square masses of rock. After very heavy rains the waterfall attains quite a respectable size, but even under such favourable conditions the popularity of the place to a great extent spoils what might otherwise be a pleasant surprise to the rambler. The woodland paths leading down to the cove from the hotel by the station are exceedingly pretty, and in the summer it is not easy to find your way, despite the direction-boards nailed to trees here and there. But there are many wooded and mossy-pathed ravines equally pretty, where no charge is made for admittance, and where you can be away from your fellow-mortals and the silver paper they throw away from the chocolate they eat.

There is a small stone circle not far from Hayburn Wyke Station, to be found without much trouble, and those who are interested in Early Man will scarcely find a neighbourhood in this country more thickly honeycombed with tumuli and ancient earthworks. There is no particularly plain pathway through the fields to the valley where this stone circle can be seen, but it can easily be found after a careful study of the large scale Ordnance map which they will show you at the hotel; and if there be any difficulty in locating the exact position of the stones, the people at the neighbouring farm are exceedingly kind in giving directions. There are about fifteen monoliths making up the circle, and they are all lying flat on the ground, so that in the summer they are very much overgrown with rank grass and low bushes. This was probably the burial-place of some prehistoric chief, but no mound remains.

CHAPTER V

SCARBOROUGH

Dazzling sunshine, a furious wind, flapping and screaming gulls, crowds of fishing-boats, and innumerable people jostling one another on the seafront, made up the chief features of my first view of Scarborough. By degrees I discovered that behind the gulls and the brown sails were old houses, their roofs dimly red through the transparent haze, and above them appeared a great green cliff, with its uneven outline defined by the curtain walls and towers of the castle which had made Scarborough a place of importance in the Civil War and in earlier times.

The wide-curving bay was filled with huge breaking waves which looked capable of destroying everything within their reach, but they seemed harmless enough when I looked a little further out, where eight or ten gray warships were riding at their anchors, apparently motionless.

From the outer arm of the harbour, where the seas were angrily attempting to dislodge the top row of stones, I could make out the great mass of gray buildings stretching right to the extremity of the bay.

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I tried to pick out individual buildings from this city-like watering-place, but, beyond discovering the position of the Spa and one or two of the mightier hotels, I could see very little, and instead fell to wondering how many landladies and how many foreign waiters the long lines of gray roofs represented. This raised so many unpleasant recollections of the various types I had encountered that I determined to go no nearer to modern Scarborough than the pier-head upon which I stood. A specially big wave, however, soon drove me from this position to a drier if more crowded spot, and, reconsidering my objections, I determined to see something of the innumerable gray streets which make up the fashionable watering-place. The terraced gardens on the steep cliffs along the sea-front were most elaborately well kept, but a more striking feature of Scarborough is the magnificence of so many of the shops. They suggest a city rather than a seaside town, and give you an idea of the magnitude of the permanent population of the place as well as the flood of summer and winter visitors. The origin of Scarborough's popularity was undoubtedly due to the chalybeate waters of the Spa, discovered in 1620, almost at the same time as those of Tunbridge Wells and Epsom.

The unmistakable signs of antiquity in the narrow streets adjoining the harbour irresistibly remind one of the days when sea-bathing had still to be popularized, when the efficacy of Scarborough's medicinal spring had not been discovered, of the days when the place bore as little resemblance to its present size or appearance as the fishing-town at Robin Hood's Bay.

We do not know that Piers Gaveston, Sir Hugh Cholmley, and other notabilities who have left their mark on the pages of Scarborough's history, might not, were they with us to-day, welcome the pierrot, the switchback, the restaurant, and other means by which pleasure-loving visitors wile away their hardly-earned holidays; but for my part the story of Scarborough's Mayor who was tossed in a blanket is far more entertaining than the songs of nigger minstrels or any of the commercial attempts to amuse.

This strangely improper procedure with one who held the highest office in the municipality took place in the reign of James II., and the King's leanings towards Popery were the cause of all the trouble.

On April 27, 1688, a declaration for liberty of conscience was published, and by royal command the said declaration was to be read in every Protestant church in the land. Mr. Thomas Aislabie, the Mayor of Scarborough, duly received a copy of the document, and, having handed it to the clergyman, Mr. Noel Boteler, ordered him to read it in church on the following Sunday morning. There seems little doubt that the worthy Mr. Boteler at once recognised a wily move on the part of the King, who under the cover of general tolerance would foster the growth of the Roman religion until such time as the Catholics had attained sufficient power to suppress

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Protestantism. Mr. Mayor was therefore informed that the declaration would not be read. On Sunday morning (August 11) when the omission had been made, the Mayor left his pew, and, stick in hand, walked up the aisle, seized the minister, and caned him as he stood at his reading-desk. Scenes of such a nature did not occur every day even in 1688, and the storm of indignation and excitement among the members of the congregation did not subside so quickly as it had risen.

The cause of the poor minister was championed in particular by a certain Captain Ouseley, and the discussion of the matter on the bowling-green on the following day led to the suggestion that the Mayor should be sent for to explain his conduct. As he took no notice of a courteous message requesting his attendance, the Captain repeated the summons accompanied by a file of musketeers. In the meantime many suggestions for dealing with Mr. Aislabie in a fitting manner were doubtless made by the Captain's brother officers, and, further, some settled course of action seems to have been agreed upon, for we do not hear of any hesitation on the part of the Captain on the arrival of the Mayor, whose rage must by this time have been bordering upon apoplexy. A strong blanket was ready, and Captains Carvil, Fitzherbert, Hanmer, and Rodney, led by Captain Ouseley and assisted by as many others as could find room, seizing the sides, in a very few moments Mr. Mayor was revolving and bumping, rising and falling, as though he were no weight at all.

This public degradation was too much to be borne without substantial redress. He therefore set out at once for London to obtain satisfaction from his Sovereign. But Ouseley was wise enough to look after his own interests in that quarter himself, and in two letters we see the upshot of the matter.

'*London*,

'September 22, 1688.

'....Captain Ouseley is said to be come to town to give reasons for tossing the mayor of Scarborough in a blanket. As part of his plea he has brought with him a collection of articles against the said mayor, and the attestations of many gentlemen of note.'

'*London*,

'September 29, 1688.

'The mayor of Scarborough and Captain Ouseley, who tossed the other in a blanket, were heard last night before the council: the Captain pleaded his majesty's gracious pardon (which is in the press) and so both were dismissed.'

Aislabie was the last of the only five Mayors the town had then known, and the fact that the office had only been instituted in 1684 seems to show that what reverence had gathered round the person of the chief magistrate was not sufficient to stand in the face of such outrageous conduct as the public caning of the minister. The townsfolk decided that they had had enough of Mayors, for on November 16 in the same autumn Scarborough was once more placed under the control of two Bailiffs, as had been the case previous to 1684.

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If the castle does not show many interesting buildings beyond the keep and the long line of walls and drum-towers, there is so much concerning it that is of great human interest that I should scarcely feel able to grumble if there were still fewer remains. Behind the ancient houses in Quay Street rises the steep, grassy cliff, up which one must climb by various rough pathways to the fortified summit. On the side facing the mainland, a hollow, known as the Dyke, is bridged by a tall and narrow archway, in place of the drawbridge of the seventeenth century and earlier times. On the same side is a massive gateway, looking across an open space to St. Mary's Church, which suffered so severely during the sieges of the castle. The maimed church—for the chancel has never been rebuilt—looks across the Dyke to the shattered keep, and so apparent are the results of the cannonading between them that no one requires to be told that the Parliamentary forces mounted their ordnance in the chancel and tower of the church, and it is equally apparent that the Royalists returned the fire hotly.

The great siege lasted for nearly a year, and although his garrison was small, and there was practically no hope of relief, Sir Hugh Cholmley seems to have kept a stout heart up to the end. With him throughout this long period of privation and suffering was his beautiful and courageous wife, whose comparatively early death, at the age of fifty-four, must to some extent be attributed to the strain and fatigue borne during these months of warfare. Sir Hugh seems to have almost worshipped his wife, for in his memoirs he is never weary of describing her perfections.

'She was of the middle stature of women,' he writes, 'and well shaped, yet in that not so singular as in the beauty of her face, which was but of a little model, and yet proportionable to her body; her eyes black and full of loveliness and sweetness, her eyebrows small and even, as if drawn with a pencil, a very little, pretty, well-shaped mouth, which sometimes (especially when in a muse or study) she would draw up into an incredible little compass; her hair a sad chestnut; her complexion brown, but clear, with a fresh colour in her cheeks, a loveliness in her looks inexpressible; and by her whole composure was so beautiful a sweet creature at her marriage as not many did parallel, few exceed her in the nation; yet the inward endowments and perfections of her mind did exceed those outward of her body, being a most pious virtuous person, of great integrity and discerning judgment in most things.'

Her husband speaks of her 'sweet good-nature,' and of how she was always ready to be touched with other people's wants before her own. That such nobleness of character should shine out brilliantly during the siege was inevitable, and Sir Hugh tells us that, though she was of a timorous nature, she bore herself during great danger with 'a courage above her sex.' On one occasion Sir John Meldrum, the Parliamentary commander, sent proposals to Sir Hugh Cholmley, which he accompanied with savage threats, that if his terms were not immediately accepted he would make a general assault on the castle that night, and in the event of one drop of his men's blood being shed he would give orders for a general massacre of the garrison, sparing neither man nor woman.

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To a man whose devotion to his beautiful wife was so great, a threat of this nature must have been a severe shock to his determination to hold out. But from his own writings we are able to picture for ourselves Sir Hugh's anxious and troubled face lighting up on the approach of the cause of his chief concern. Lady Cholmley, without any sign of the inward misgivings or dejection which, with her gentle and shrinking nature, must have been a great struggle, came to her husband, and implored him to on no account let her peril influence his decision to the detriment of his own honour or the King's affairs.

Sir John Meldrum's proposals having been rejected, the garrison prepared itself for the furious attack commenced on May 11.

The assault was well planned, for while the Governor's attention was turned towards the gateway leading to the castle entrance, another attack was made at the southern end of the wall towards the sea, where until the year 1730 Charles's Tower stood. The bloodshed at this point was greater than at the gateway. At the head of a chosen division of troops, Sir John Meldrum climbed the almost precipitous ascent with wonderful courage, only to meet with such spirited resistance on the part of the besieged that, when the attack was abandoned, it was discovered that Meldrum had received a dangerous wound penetrating to his thigh, and that several of his officers and men had been killed. Meanwhile, at the gateway, the first success of the assailants had been checked at the foot of the Grand Tower or Keep, for at that point the rush of drab-coated and helmeted men was received by such a shower of stones and missiles that many stumbled and were crushed on the steep pathway. Not even Cromwell's men could continue to face such a reception, and before very long the Governor could embrace his wife in the knowledge that the great attack had failed.

In between such scenes as these, when the air was filled with the shouts and yells of attackers and besieged, when the crack of the muskets and the intermittent reports of the cannon almost deafened her, Lady Cholmley was assiduously attending to the wounded and the many cases of scurvy, which was rampant among the garrison. One of her maids who shared these labours crept out of the castle one night with a view to reaching the town and escaping further drudgery and privations; but a Roundhead sentry discovered her and sent her back to the castle, thinking that she was a spy. When the great keep was partially destroyed, Lady Cholmley was forced 'to lie in a little cabbin on the ground several months together, when she took a defluction of rhume upon one of her eyes, which troubled her ever after, and got also a touch of the scurvy then rife in the castle, and of which it is thought she was not well after.' Who can wonder that Sir Hugh appreciated the courage of this noble lady, and I marvel still more at her fortitude when I read of the frailties her husband mentions

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so gently, fearing, no doubt, that without a few shadows no one would accept his picture as genuine. 'If she had taken impression of anything, it was hard to remove it with reason or argument, till she had considered of it herself; neither could she well endure adversity or crosses, though it pleased the Lord to exercise her with them, by my many troubles and the calamity of the times. She would be much troubled at evils which could neither be prevented nor remedied, and sometimes discontented without any great cause, especially in her disposition of health; for, being of a tender constitution, and spun of a fine thread, every disaster took impression on her body and mind, and would make her both sick and often inclinable to be melancholy, especially in my absence.'

At last, on July 22, 1645—his forty-fifth birthday—Sir Hugh was forced to come to an agreement with the enemy, by which he honourably surrendered the castle three days later. It was a sad procession that wound its way down the steep pathway, littered with the debris of broken masonry: for many of Sir Hugh's officers and soldiers were in such a weak condition that they had to be carried out in sheets or helped along between two men, and the Parliamentary officer adds, rather tersely, that 'the rest were not very fit to march.' The scurvy had depleted the ranks of the defenders to such an extent that the women in the castle, despite the presence of Lady Cholmley, threatened to stone the Governor unless he capitulated.

The reduction of Scarborough Castle was considered a profound success to the side of the Parliament, 'The Moderate Intelligencer' of July 23, 1645, announcing the fact with great satisfaction, 'we heare likewise that *Scarborough* is also yeelded into our hands, Sir Hugh hath none other conditions for himself, but with his wife and children passe beyond seas. This is excellent good newes, and is a very terrible blow to the enemy.'

Three years later the castle was again besieged by the Parliamentary forces, for Colonel Matthew Boynton, the Governor, had declared for the King. The garrison held out from August to December, when terms were made with Colonel Hugh Bethell, by which the Governor, officers, gentlemen, and soldiers, marched out with 'their colours flying, drums beating, musquets loaden, bandeleers filled, matches lighted, and bullet in mouth, to a close called Scarborough Common,' where they laid down their arms.

Before I leave Scarborough I must go back to early times, in order that the antiquity of the place may not be slighted owing to the omission of any reference to the town in the Domesday Book. Tosti, Count of Northumberland, who, as everyone knows, was brother of the Harold who fought at Senlac Hill, had brought about an insurrection of the Northumbrians, and having been dispossessed by his brother, he revenged himself by inviting the help of Haralld Hadrada, King of Norway. The Norseman promptly accepted the offer, and, taking

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with him his family and an army of warriors, sailed for the Shetlands, where Tosti joined him. The united forces then came down the east coast of Britain until they reached Scardaburgum, where they landed and prepared to fight the inhabitants. The town was then built entirely of timber, and there was, apparently, no castle of any description on the great hill, for the Norsemen, finding their opponents inclined to offer a stout resistance, tried other tactics. They gained possession of the hill, constructed a huge fire, and when the wood was burning fiercely, flung the blazing brands down on to the wooden houses below. The fire spread from one hut to another with sufficient speed to drive out the defenders, who in the confusion which followed were slaughtered by the enemy.

This occurred in the momentous year 1066, when Harold, having defeated the Norsemen and slain Haralld Hadrada at Stamford Bridge, had to hurry southwards to meet William the Norman at Hastings. It is not surprising, therefore, that the compilers of the Conqueror's survey should have failed to record the existence of the blackened embers of what had once been a town. But such a site as the castle hill could not long remain idle in the stormy days of the Norman Kings, and William le Gros, Earl of Albemarle and Lord of Holderness, recognising the natural defensibility of the rock, built the massive walls which have withstood so many assaults, and even now form the most prominent feature of Scarborough.

CHAPTER VI

WHITBY

'Behold the glorious summer sea
As night's dark wings unfold,
And o'er the waters, 'neath the stars,
The harbour lights behold.'

E. Teschemacher.

Despite a huge influx of summer visitors, and despite the modern town which has grown up to receive them, Whitby is still one of the most strikingly picturesque towns in England. But at the same time, if one excepts the abbey, the church, and the market-house, there are scarcely any architectural attractions in the town. The charm of the place does not lie so much in detail as in broad effects. The narrow streets have no surprises in the way of carved-oak brackets or curious panelled doorways, although narrow passages and steep flights of stone steps abound. On the other hand, the old parts of the town, when seen from a distance, are always presenting themselves in new apparel.

In the early morning the East Cliff generally appears merely as a pale gray silhouette with a square projection representing the church, and a fretted one the abbey. But as the sun climbs upwards, colour and definition grow out of the haze of smoke and shadows, and the roofs assume their ruddy tones. At mid-day, when the sunlight pours down upon the medley of houses clustered along the face of the cliff, the scene is brilliantly coloured. The predominant note is the red of the chimneys and roofs and stray patches

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of brickwork, but the walls that go down to the water's edge are green below and full of rich browns above, and in many places the sides of the cottages are coloured with an ochre wash, while above them all the top of the cliff appears covered with grass. On a clear day, when detached clouds are passing across the sun, the houses are sometimes lit up in the strangest fashion, their quaint outlines being suddenly thrown out from the cliff by a broad patch of shadow upon the grass and rocks behind. But there is scarcely a chimney in this old part of Whitby that does not contribute to the mist of blue-gray smoke that slowly drifts up the face of the cliff, and thus, when there is no bright sunshine, colour and detail are subdued in the haze.

In many towns whose antiquity and picturesqueness are more popular than the attractions of Whitby, the railway deposits one in some distressingly ugly modern excrescence, from which it may even be necessary for a stranger to ask his way to the old-world features he has come to see. But at Whitby the railway, without doing any harm to the appearance of the town, at once gives a visitor as typical a scene of fishing-life as he will ever find. When the tide is up and the wharves are crowded with boats, this upper portion of Whitby Harbour is at its best, and to step from the railway compartment entered at King's Cross into this busy scene is an experience to be remembered.

In the deepening twilight of a clear evening the harbour gathers to itself the additional charm of mysterious indefiniteness, and among the long-drawn-out reflections appear sinuous lines of yellow light beneath the lamps by the bridge. Looking towards the ocean from the outer harbour, one sees the massive arms which Whitby has thrust into the waves, holding aloft the steady lights that

'Safely guide the mighty ships
Into the harbour bay.'

If we keep to the waterside, modern Whitby has no terrors for us. It is out of sight, and might therefore have never existed. But when we have crossed the bridge, and passed along the narrow thoroughfare known as Church Street to the steps leading up the face of the cliff, we must prepare ourselves for a new aspect of the town. There, upon the top of the West Cliff, stand rows of sad-looking and dun-coloured lodging-houses, relieved by the aggressive bulk of a huge hotel, with corner turrets, that frowns savagely at the unfinished crescent, where there are many apartments with 'rooms facing the sea.' The only redeeming feature of this modern side of Whitby is the circumscribed area it occupies, so that the view from the top of the 199 steps we have climbed is not altogether vitiated. A distinctive feature of the west side of the river has been lost in the sails of the Union Mill, which were taken down some years ago, and the solid brick building where many of the Whitby people, by the excellent method of cooperation, obtained their flour at reduced prices is now the headquarters of some volunteers.

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The town seems to have no idea of re-erecting the sails of the windmill, and as I have so far heard of no scheme for demolishing the unpleasant-looking houses on the West Cliff, we will shut our eyes to these shortcomings, and admit that the task is not difficult in the presence of such a superb view over Whitby's glorious surroundings. We look over the chimney-stacks of the topmost houses, and see the silver Esk winding placidly in the deep channel it has carved for itself; and further away we see the far-off moorland heights, brown and blue, where the sources of the broad river down below are fed by the united efforts of innumerable tiny streams deep in the heather. Behind us stands the massive-looking parish church, with its Norman tower, so sturdily built that its height seems scarcely greater than its breadth. There is surely no other church with such a ponderous exterior that is so completely deceptive as to its internal aspect, for St. Mary's contains the most remarkable series of beehive-like galleries that were ever crammed into a parish church. They are not merely very wide and ill-arranged, but they are superposed one above the other. The free use of white paint all over the sloping tiers of pews has prevented the interior from being as dark as it would have otherwise been, but the result of all this painted deal has been to give the building the most eccentric and indecorous appearance. Still, there are few who will fail to thank the good folks of Whitby for preserving an ecclesiastical curiosity of such an unusual nature. The box-pews on the floor of the church are separated by very narrow gangways—we cannot call them aisles—and the gallery across the chancel arch is particularly noticeable for the twisted wooden columns supporting it. Various pews in the transepts and elsewhere have been reserved for many generations for the use of people from outlying villages, such as Aislaby, Ugglebarnby, and Hawskercum-Stainsacre, and it was this necessity for accommodating a very large congregation that taxed the ingenuity of the churchwardens, and resulted in the strange interior existing to-day.

The early history of Whitby from the time of the landing of Roman soldiers in Dunsley Bay seems to be very closely associated with the abbey founded by Hilda about two years after the battle of Winwidfield, fought on November 15, A.D. 654; but I will not venture to state an opinion here as to whether there was any town at Streoneshalh before the building of the abbey, or whether the place that has since become known as Whitby grew on account of the presence of the abbey. Such matters as these have been fought out by an expert in the archaeology of Cleveland—the late Canon Atkinson, who seemed to take infinite pleasure in demolishing the elaborately constructed theories of those painstaking historians of the eighteenth century, Dr. Young and Mr. Lionel Charlton.

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Many facts, however, which throw light on the early days of the abbey are now unassailable. We see that Hilda must have been a most remarkable woman for her times, instilling into those around her a passion for learning as well as right-living, for despite the fact that they worked and prayed in rude wooden buildings, with walls formed, most probably, of split tree-trunks, after the fashion of the church at Greenstead in Essex, we find the institution producing, among others, such men as Bosa and John, both Bishops of York, and such a poet as Caadmon. The legend of his inspiration, however, may be placed beside the story of how the saintly Abbess turned the snakes into the fossil ammonites with which the liassic shores of Whitby are strewn. Hilda, who probably died in the year 680, was succeeded by Aelfleda, the daughter of King Oswin of Northumbria, whom she had trained in the abbey, and there seems little doubt that her pupil carried on successfully the beneficent work of the foundress.

Aelfleda had the support of her mother's presence as well as the wise counsels of Bishop Trumwine, who had taken refuge at Streoneshalh, after having been driven from his own sphere of work by the depredations of the Picts and Scots. We then learn that Aelfleda died at the age of fifty-nine, but from that year—probably 713—a complete silence falls upon the work of the abbey; for if any records were made during the next century and a half, they have been totally lost. About the year 867 the Danes reached this part of Yorkshire, and we know that they laid waste the abbey, and most probably the town also; but the invaders gradually started new settlements, or 'bys,' and Whitby must certainly have grown into a place of some size by the time of Edward the Confessor, for just previous to the Norman invasion it was assessed for Danegeld to the extent of a sum equivalent to L3,500 at the present time.

After the Conquest a monk named Reinfrid succeeded in reviving a monastery on the site of the old one, having probably gained the permission of William de Percy, the lord of the district. The new establishment, however, was for monks only, and was for some time merely a priory.

The form of the successive buildings from the time of Hilda until the building of the stately abbey church, whose ruins are now to be seen, is a subject of great interest, but, unfortunately, there are few facts to go upon. The very first church was, as I have already suggested, a building of rude construction, scarcely better than the humble dwellings of the monks and nuns. The timber walls were most probably thatched, and the windows would be of small lattice or boards pierced with small holes. Gradually the improvements brought about would have led to the use of stone for the walls, and the buildings destroyed by the Danes probably resembled such examples of Anglo-Saxon work as may still be seen in the churches of Bradford-on-Avon and Monkwearmouth.

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The buildings erected by Reinfrid under the Norman influence then prevailing in England must have been a slight advance upon the destroyed fabric, and we know that during the time of his successor, Serlo de Percy, there was a certain Godfrey in charge of the building operations, and there is every reason to believe that he completed the church during the fifty years of prosperity the monastery passed through at that time. But this was not the structure which survived, for towards the end of Stephen's reign, or during that of Henry II., the unfortunate convent was devastated by the King of Norway, who entered the harbour, and, in the words of the chronicle, 'laid waste everything, both within doors and without.' The abbey slowly recovered from this disaster, and if any church were built on the ruins between 1160 and the reconstruction commenced in 1220, there is no part of it surviving to-day in the beautiful ruin that still makes a conspicuous landmark from the sea.

It was after the Dissolution that the abbey buildings came into the hands of Sir Richard Cholmley, who paid over to Henry VIII. the sum of L333 8s. 4d. The manors of Eskdaleside and Ugglebarnby, with all 'their rights, members and appurtenances as they formerly had belonged to the abbey of Whitby,' henceforward belonged to Sir Richard and his successors. Sir Hugh Cholmley, whose defence of Scarborough Castle has made him a name in history, was born on July 22, 1600, at Roxby, near Pickering. He has been justly called 'the father of Whitby,' and it is to him we owe a fascinating account of his life at Whitby in Stuart and Jacobean times. He describes how he lived for some time in the gate-house of the abbey buildings, 'till my house was repaired and habitable, which then was very ruinous and all unhandsome, the wall being only of timber and plaster, and ill-contrived within: and besides the repairs, or rather re-edifying the house, I built the stable and barn, I heightened the outwalls of the court double to what they were, and made all the wall round about the paddock; so that the place hath been improved very much, both for beauty and profit, by me more than all my ancestors, for there was not a tree about the house but was set in my time, and almost by my own hand. The Court levels, which laid upon a hanging ground, unhandsomely, very ill-watered, having only the low well, which is in the Almsers-close, which I covered; and also discovered, and erected, the other adjoining conduit, and the well in the courtyard from whence I conveyed by leaden pipes water into the house, brewhouse, and washhouse.'

In the spring of 1636 the reconstruction of the abbey house was finished, and Sir Hugh moved in with his family. 'My dear wife,' he says, '(who was excellent at dressing and making all handsome within doors) had put it into a fine posture, and furnished with many good things, so that, I believe, there were few gentlemen in the country, of my rank, exceeded it.... I was at this time made Deputy-lieutenant and Colonel over the Train-bands within the hundred of Whitby Strand, Ryedale, Pickering, Lythe and Scarborough town; for that, my father being dead, the country looked upon me as the chief of my family.'

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Sir Hugh had been somewhat addicted to gambling in his younger days, and had made a few debts of his own before he undertook to deal with his father's heavy liabilities, and in the early years of his married life he had been very much taken up with the difficult and arduous work of paying off the amounts due to the clamorous creditors. During this process he had been forced to live very quietly, and had incidentally sifted out his real friends from among his relations and acquaintances. Thus, it is with pardonable pride that he says: 'Having mastered my debts, I did not only appear at all public meetings in a very gentlemanly equipage, but lived in as handsome and plentiful fashion at home as any gentleman in all the country, of my rank. I had between thirty and forty in my ordinary family, a chaplain who said prayers every morning at six, and again before dinner and supper, a porter who merely attended the gates, which were ever shut up before dinner, when the bell rung to prayers, and not opened till one o'clock, except for some strangers who came to dinner, which was ever fit to receive three or four besides my family, without any trouble; and whatever their fare was, they were sure to have a hearty welcome. Twice a week, a certain number of old people, widows and indigent persons, were served at my gates with bread and good pottage made of beef, which I mention that those which succeed may follow the example.' Not content with merely benefiting the aged folk of his town, Sir Hugh took great pains to extend the piers, and in 1632 went to London to petition the 'Council-table' to allow a general contribution for this purpose throughout the country. As a result of his efforts, 'all that part of the pier to the west end of the harbour' was erected, and yet he complains that, though it was the means of preserving a large section of the town from the sea, the townsfolk would not interest themselves in the repairs necessitated by force of the waves. 'I wish, with all my heart,' he exclaims, 'the next generation may have more public spirit.'

Sir Hugh Cholmley also built a market-house for the town, and removed the bridge to its present position. Owing to rebuilding, neither of these actual works remains with us to-day, but their influence on the progress of Whitby must have been considerable.

On a June morning in the year after Sir Hugh had settled down so handsomely in his refurbished house, two Dutch men-of-war chased into the harbour 'a small pickroon belonging to the King of Spain.' The Hollanders had 400 men in one ship and 200 in the other, but the Spaniard had only thirty men and two small guns. The Holland ships proceeded to anchor outside the harbour, and, lowering their longboats, sent ashore forty men, all armed with pistols. But the Spaniards had been on the alert, and having warped their vessel to a safer position above the bridge, they placed their two guns on the deck, and every man prepared himself to defend the ship.

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‘I, having notice of this,’ writes Sir Hugh, ’fearing they might do here the like affront as they did at Scarborough, where they landed one hundred men, and took a ship belonging to the King of Spain out of the harbour, sent for the Holland Captains, and ordered them not to offer any act of hostility; for that the Spaniard was the King’s friend, and to have protection in his ports. After some expostulations, they promised not to meddle with the Dunkirker [Spaniard] if he offered no injury to them; which I gave him strict charge against, and to trust to the King’s protection. These Holland Captains leaving me, and going into the town, sent for the Dunkirk Captain to dine with them, and soon after took occasion to quarrel with him, at the same time ordered their men to fall on the Dunkirk ship, which they soon surprised, the Captain and most of the men being absent. I being in my courtyard, and hearing some pistols discharged, and being told the Dunkirker and Hollanders were at odds, made haste unto the town, having only a cane in my hand, and one that followed me without any weapon, thinking my presence would pacify all differences. When I came to the river-side, on the sand between the coal-yard and the bridge, I found the Holland Captain with a pistol in his hand, calling to his men, then in the Dunkirk ship, to send a boat for him. I gave him good words, and held him in treaty until I got near him, and then, giving a leap on him, caught hold of his pistol, which I became master of; yet not without some hazard from the ship, for one from thence levelled a musket at me; but I espying it, turned the Captain between me and him, which prevented his shooting.’

When Sir Hugh had secured the Captain, he sent a boatload of men to retake the ship, and as soon as the Hollanders saw it approaching, they fled to their own vessels outside the harbour. In the afternoon Sir Hugh intercepted a letter to his prisoner, telling him to be of good cheer, for at midnight they would land 200 men and bring him away. This was a serious matter, and Sir Hugh sent to Sir John Hotham, the High Sheriff of the county, who at once came from Fyling, and summoned all the adjacent train-bands. There were about 200 men on guard all through the night, and evidently the Hollanders had observed the activity on shore, for they made no attack. The ships continued to hover outside the harbour for two or three days, until Sir Hugh sent the Captain to York. He was afterwards taken to London, where he remained a prisoner, after the fashion of those times, for nearly two years.

It was after the troublous times of the Civil War that Sir Hugh re-established himself at Whitby, and opened a new era of prosperity for himself and the townsfolk in the alum-works at Saltwick Nab.

CHAPTER VII

THE CLEVELAND HILLS

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On their their northern and western flanks the Cleveland Hills have a most imposing and mountainous aspect, although their greatest altitudes do not aspire more than about 1,500 feet. But they rise so suddenly to their full height out of the flat sea of green country that they often appear as a coast defended by a bold range of mountains. Roseberry Topping stands out in grim isolation, on its masses of alum rock, like a huge seaworn crag, considerably over 1,000 feet high. But this strangely menacing peak raises its defiant head over nothing but broad meadows, arable land, and woodlands, and his only warfare is with the lower strata of storm-clouds, which is a convenient thing for the people who live in these parts; for long ago they used the peak as a sign of approaching storms, having reduced the warning to the easily-remembered couplet:

’When Roseberry Topping wears a cap,
Let Cleveland then beware of a clap.’

In a similar manner the Scarborough folk used Oliver’s Mount, the isolated hill at the back of the town, as a ready-made barometer, for they knew that

’When Oliver’s Mount puts on his hat,
Scarborough town will pay for that.’

It is difficult to decide on the correct spelling of Roseberry Topping, as it is often spelt in the same way as the earldom, and as frequently in old writings it appears as ‘Rosebury.’ Camden, who wrote in Tudor times, called it Ounsberry Topping, which certainly does not help matters.

From the fact that you can see this remarkable peak from almost every point of the compass except south-westwards, it must follow that from the top of the hill there are views in all those directions. But to see so much of the country at once comes as a surprise to everyone. Stretching inland towards the backbone of England, there is spread out a huge tract of smiling country, covered with a most complex network of hedges, which gradually melt away into the indefinite blue edge of the world where the hills of Wensleydale rise from the plain. Looking across the little town of Guisborough, lying near the shelter of the hills, to the broad sweep of the North Sea, this piece of Yorkshire seems so small that one almost expects to see the Cheviots away in the north. But, beyond the winding Tees and the drifting smoke of the great manufacturing towns on its banks, one must be content with the county of Durham, a huge section of which is plainly visible. Turning towards the brown moorlands, the cultivation is exchanged for ridge beyond ridge of total desolation—a huge tract of land in this crowded England where the population for many square miles at a time consists of the inmates of a lonely farm or two in the circumscribed cultivated areas of the dales.

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Eight or nine hundred years ago these valleys were choked up with forests. The Early British inhabitants were more inclined to the hill-tops than the hollows, if the innumerable indications of their settlements be any guide, and there is every reason for believing that many of the hollows in the folds of the heathery moorlands were rarely visited by man. Thus, the suggestion has been made that a few of the last representatives of now extinct monsters may have survived in these wild retreats, for how otherwise do we find persistent stories in these parts of Yorkshire, handed down we cannot tell how many centuries, of strange creatures described as ‘worms’? At Loftus they show you the spot where a ‘grisly worm’ had its lair, and in many places there are traditions of strange long-bodied dragons who were slain by various valiant men.

When we remember that the last wolf was killed in Scotland in the seventeenth century, that Africa is still adding to the list of living animals, and that the caves at Kirkdale, near Kirby Moorside, revealed the bones of elephants, tigers, hyenas, and rhinoceroses, in an excellent state of preservation, though they were all broken, we are inclined to believe that these strange stories may have had some basis of fact.

On Easby Moor, a few miles to the south of Roseberry Topping, the tall column to the memory of Captain Cook stands like a lighthouse on this inland coast-line. The lofty position it occupies among these brown and purply-green heights makes the monument visible over a great tract of the sailor’s native Cleveland. The people who live in Marton, the village of his birthplace, can see the memorial of their hero’s fame, and the country lads of to-day are constantly reminded of the success which attended the industry and perseverance of a humble Marton boy.

The cottage where James Cook was born in 1728 has gone, but the field in which it stood is called Cook’s Garth. The shop at Staithes, generally spoken of as a ‘huckster’s,’ where Cook was apprenticed as a boy, has also disappeared; but, unfortunately, that unpleasant story of his having taken a shilling from his master’s till, when the attractions of the sea proved too much for him to resist, persistently clings to all accounts of his early life. There seems no evidence to convict him of this theft, but there are equally no facts by which to clear him. But if we put into the balance his subsequent term of employment at Whitby, the excellent character he gained when he went to sea, and Professor J.K. Laughton’s statement that he left Staithes ’after some disagreement with his master,’ there seems every reason to believe that the story is untrue. If it were otherwise, the towering monument on Easby Moor would be a questionable inspiration to posterity.

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I have seldom seen a more uninhabited and inhospitable-looking country than the broad extent of purple hills that stretch away to the south-west from Great Ayton and Kildale Moors. Walking from Guisborough to Kildale on a wild and stormy afternoon in October, I was totally alone for the whole distance when I had left behind me the baker's boy who was on his way to Hutton with a heavy basket of bread and cakes. Hutton, which is somewhat of a model village for the retainers attached to Hutton Hall, stands in a lovely hollow at the edge of the moors. The steep hills are richly clothed with sombre woods, and the peace and seclusion reigning there is in marked contrast to the bleak wastes above. When I climbed the steep road on that autumn afternoon, and, passing the zone of tall, withered bracken, reached the open moorland, I seemed to have come out merely to be the plaything of the elements; for the south-westerly gale, when it chose to do so, blew so fiercely that it was difficult to make any progress at all. Overhead was a dark roof composed of heavy masses of cloud, forming long parallel lines of gray right to the horizon. On each side of the rough, water-worn road the heather made a low wall, two or three feet high, and stretched right away to the horizon in every direction. In the lulls, between the fierce blasts, I could hear the trickle of the water in the rivulets deep down in the springy cushion of heather. A few nimble sheep would stare at me from a distance, and then disappear, or some grouse might hover over a piece of rising ground; but otherwise there were no signs of living creatures. Nearing Kildale, the road suddenly plunged downwards to a stream flowing through a green, cultivated valley, with a lonely farm on the further slope. There was a fir-wood above this, and as I passed over the hill, among the tall, bare stems, the clouds parted a little in the west, and let a flood of golden light into the wood. Instantly the gloom seemed to disappear, and beyond the dark shoulder of moorland, where the Cook monument appeared against the glory of the sunset, there seemed to reign an all-pervading peace, the wood being quite silent, for the wind had dropped.

The rough track through the trees descended hurriedly, and soon gave a wide view over Kildale. The valley was full of colour from the glowing west, and the steep hillsides opposite appeared lighter than the indigo clouds above, now slightly tinged with purple. The little village of Kildale nestled down below, its church half buried in yellow foliage.

The railway comes through Eskdale from Whitby to Stockton-on-Tees, and thus gives the formerly remote valley easy communication with the outside world. It is dangerous, however, not to allow an ample margin for catching the trains, for there are only two or three in each direction in the autumn and winter, and a gap of about four hours generally separates the trains. I had been a long ramble over the moors on the north side of Eskdale, and had allowed the sun to set while I was still drawing on the top of Danby Beacon. But, having a good map with me, I was quite confident of finding the road to Lealholm without difficulty, as the distance was only a very few miles.

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The crimson globe in the west disappeared behind the dark horizon over the two Fryup valleys, and left the world in twilight. But it would not be dark for an hour, and except for mistaking the sheep for boulders and boulders for sheep, and being consequently surprised when what I had imagined was a mass of gray stone suddenly disappeared on my approach, nothing unusual happened. I had no fear of losing my way, but what my map had led me to believe would be a plain road was a mere track in the heather, and at times it became too indistinct to follow easily. Lealholm Station lay in the valley on my right, but I could find no road leading there, and I wasted precious time in frequent consultations with the map. Coming to a farm, I inquired the way, and was directed over a number of muddy fields, which gradually brought me down into the valley. It was now sufficiently dark for all the landmarks I had noticed to be scarcely visible, but, on inquiring at a cottage, I was told that it would take only ten minutes to walk to the station. I had a clear quarter of an hour, and, hurrying forward, soon found myself on a railway-bridge over a deep cutting. There was just enough light to see that no station was in sight, and it was impossible to find in which direction the station lay. There was no time to go back to the cottage, and there were no others to be seen. Looking at the map again, I could not discover the position of this bridge, for it was on no road, as it seemed merely to connect the pastures on either side. However, I felt fairly certain that I had rather overstepped the station, and therefore climbed down the bank into the cutting, and commenced walking towards the west. Coming out into the open, I thought I saw the lamps on the platforms about half a mile further on; but on pressing forward the lights became suddenly bigger, and in a minute my train passed me with a thundering rush. Evidently Lealholm was to the east, and not the west of that cutting. It was then 5.40, and the next train left for Whitby at about a quarter to ten. When the tail-lights of the train had disappeared into the cutting, I felt very much alone, and the silence of the countryside became oppressive. It seemed to me that this part of Yorkshire was just as lonely as when Canon Atkinson first commenced his work in Danby parish, and I was reminded of his friend's remark on hearing that he was going there: 'Why, Danby was not found out when they sent Bonaparte to St. Helena, or else they never would have taken the trouble to send him all the way there!'

The ruined Danby Castle can still be seen on the slope above the Esk, but the ancient Bow Bridge at Castleton, which was built at the end of the twelfth century, was barbarously and needlessly destroyed in 1873. A picture of the bridge has, fortunately, been preserved in Canon Atkinson's 'Forty Years in a Moorland Parish.' That book has been so widely read that it seems scarcely necessary to refer to it here, but without the help of the Vicar, who knew every inch of his wild parish, the Danby district must seem much less interesting.

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CHAPTER VIII

GUISBOROUGH AND THE SKELTON VALLEY

Although a mere fragment of the Augustinian Priory of Guisborough is standing to-day, it is sufficiently imposing to convey a powerful impression of the former size and magnificence of the monastic church. This fragment is the gracefully buttressed east end of the choir, which rises from the level meadow-land to the east of the town. The stonework is now of a greenish-gray tone, but in the shadows there is generally a look of blue. Beyond the ruin and through the opening of the great east window, now bare of tracery, you see the purple moors, with the ever-formidable Roseberry Topping holding its head above the green woods and pastures.

The destruction of the priory took place most probably during the reign of Henry VIII., but there are no recorded facts to give the date of the spoiling of the stately buildings. The materials were probably sold to the highest bidder, for in the town of Guisborough there are scattered many fragments of richly-carved stone, and Ord, one of the historians of Cleveland, says: 'I have beheld with sorrow, and shame, and indignation, the richly ornamented columns and carved architraves of God's temple supporting the thatch of a pig-house.'

The Norman priory church, founded in 1119, by the wealthy Robert de Brus of Skelton, was, unfortunately, burnt down on May 16, 1289. Walter of Hemingburgh, a canon of Guisborough, has written a quaintly detailed account of the origin of the fire. Translated from the monkish Latin, he says: 'On the first day of rogation-week, a devouring flame consumed our church of Gysburn, with many theological books and nine costly chalices, as well as vestments and sumptuous images; and because past events are serviceable as a guide to future inquiries, I have thought it desirable, in the present little treatise, to give an account of the catastrophe, that accidents of a similar nature may be avoided through this calamity allotted to us. On the day above mentioned, which was very destructive to us, a vile plumber, with his two workmen, burnt our church whilst soldering up two holes in the old lead with fresh pewter. For some days he had already, with a wicked disposition, commenced, and placed his iron crucibles, along with charcoal and fire, on rubbish, or steps of a great height, upon dry wood with some turf and other combustibles. About noon (in the cross, in the body of the church, where he remained at his work until after Mass) he descended before the procession of the convent, thinking that the fire had been put out by his workmen. They, however, came down quickly after him, without having completely extinguished the fire; and the fire among the charcoal revived, and partly from the heat of the iron, and partly from the sparks of the charcoal, the fire spread itself to the wood and other combustibles beneath. After the fire was thus commenced, the

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lead melted, and the joists upon the beams ignited; and then the fire increased prodigiously, and consumed everything.' Hemingburgh concludes by saying that all that they could get from the culprits was the exclamation, 'Quid potui ego?' Shortly after this disaster the Prior and convent wrote to Edward II., excusing themselves from granting a corrody owing to their great losses through the burning of the monastery, as well as the destruction of their property by the Scots. But Guisborough, next to Fountains, was almost the richest establishment in Yorkshire, and thus in a few years' time there arose from the Norman foundations a stately church and convent built in the Early Decorated style.

Glimpses of the inner life of the priory are given in the Archbishop's registers at York, which show how close and searching were the visitations by the Archbishop in person or his commissioners, and one of the documents throws light on the sad necessity for these inspections. It deals with Archbishop Wickwaine's visit in 1280, and we find that the canons are censured for many short-comings. They were not to go outside the cloister after compline (the last service of the day) on the pretext of visiting guests. They were not to keep expensive schools for rich or poor, unless with special sanction. They were to turn out of the infirmary and punish the persons lying there who were only pretending to be ill, and the really sick were to be more kindly treated. There had evidently been discrimination in the quality of food served out to certain persons in the frater; but this was to be stopped, and food of one kind was to be divided equally. A more strict silence was to be kept in the cloister, and no one was to refrain from joining in the praises of God whilst in the choir. There seems to have been much improper conversation among the canons, for they are specially adjured in Christ to abstain from repeating immoral stories. Some of the canons who had made themselves notorious for quarrelling and caballing were to be debarred from promotion, and were commended to the Prior and Subprior for punishment.

In 1309 Simon Constable, a refractory canon of Bridlington, was sent to Guisborough to undergo a course of penance, change of residence being always considered to give an excellent opportunity for thorough reform. However, in this case no good seems to have resulted, for about five years later he was sent back to Bridlington with a worse character than before, and, besides much prayer and humiliation, he was to receive a *disciplina* every Friday at the hands of the Prior. This made no improvement in his conduct, for in 1321 his behaviour brought him another penance and still greater severity. A few years after this the Archbishop seems to have reproached the community for the conduct of this unruly brother, which was scarcely fair. The last vision of Simon Constable shows him to be as impenitent as ever, and the Archbishop makes the awful threat that, if he does not reform at once, he will be put in a more confined place than he has ever been in before! Can this suggest that the wicked canon was to be bricked up alive?

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These internal troubles were not, however, generally known to the outside world, but the unfaltering searchlight of the records falls upon such great folk as Peter de Mauley, fifth Baron Mulgrave, whose castle at Mulgrave, near Whitby, is mentioned elsewhere; Lucy de Thweng, wife of Sir William le Latimer; Sir Nicholas de Meynyl; and Katherine, wife of Sir John Dentorp, whose conduct merely reflected the morals of medieval times. It was, indeed, no uncommon event for the congregation to hear some high-born culprit confessing his sins as he walked barefoot and scantily clothed in the procession in York Minster. An exceedingly beautiful crucifix of copper, richly gilded, was discovered during the early part of last century, when some men were digging amongst the foundations of an old building in Commondale. There seems little doubt that this was a cell or chapel belonging to the monastery, for the crucifix bears the date 1119, the year of the founding of Guisborough Priory. Another metal crucifix, probably belonging to the thirteenth century, was discovered at Ingleby Arncliffe. It was beautifully inlaid with brilliant white, green, red, and blue enamels, and the figure of Christ was discovered to be hollow, and to contain two ancient parchments, written in monkish Latin and scarcely legible. One of them was a charm, addressed to 'ye elves, and demons and all kind of apparition,' who were called upon in the name of the Trinity, the Virgin Mary, the Apostles, Martyrs, Mark, Matthew, Luke, and John, and the elect generally, to 'hurt not this servant of God, Adam Osanna, by night nor by day, but that, through the very great mercy of God Jesus Christ, by the help of Saint Mary, the mother of our Lord Jesus Christ, he may rest in peace from all the aforesaid and other evils.'

Another intensely interesting relic of the great priory is the altar-tomb, believed to be that of Robert de Brus of Annandale. The stone slabs are now built into the walls on each side of the porch of Guisborough Church. They may have been removed there from the abbey for safety at the time of the dissolution. Hemingburgh, in his chronicle for the year 1294, says: 'Robert de Brus the fourth died on the eve of Good Friday; who disputed with John de Balliol, before the King of England, about the succession to the kingdom of Scotland. And, as he ordered when alive, he was buried in the priory of Gysburn with great honour, beside his own father.' A great number of other famous people were buried here in accordance with their wills. Guisborough has even been claimed as the resting-place of Robert Bruce, the champion of Scottish freedom, but there is ample evidence for believing that his heart was buried at Melrose Abbey and his body in the church of Dunfermline.

The memory of Mr. George Venables—that most excellent man who devoted many years to gathering funds for a charity school in the town—is preserved on a monument in the church. He had retired from business, but, in order to find the means to start the school, he resumed his labours in London, and devoted the whole of the profits to this useful object.

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The central portion of the town of Guisborough, by the market-cross and the two chief inns, is quaint and fairly picturesque, but the long street as it goes westward deteriorates into rows of new cottages, inevitable in a mining country.

Mining operations have been carried on around Guisborough since the time of Queen Elizabeth, for the discovery of alum dates from that period, and when that industry gradually declined, it was replaced by the iron-mines of to-day. Mr. Thomas Chaloner of Guisborough, in his travels on the Continent about the end of the sixteenth century, saw the Pope's alum-works near Rome, and was determined to start the industry in his native parish of Guisborough, feeling certain that alum could be worked with profit in his own county. As it was essential to have one or two men who were thoroughly versed in the processes of the manufacture, Mr. Chaloner induced some of the Pope's workmen by heavy bribes to come to England. The risks attending this overt act were terrible, for the alum-works brought in a large revenue to His Holiness, and the discovery of such a design would have meant capital punishment to the offender. The workmen were therefore induced to get into large casks, which were secretly conveyed on board a ship that was shortly sailing for England.

When the Pope received the intelligence some time afterwards, he thundered forth against Mr. Chaloner and the workmen the most awful and comprehensive curse. They were to be cursed most wholly and thoroughly in every part of their bodies, every saint was to curse them, and from the thresholds of the holy church of God Almighty they were to be sequestered, that they might 'be tormented, disposed of, and delivered over with Dathan and Abiram, and with those who say unto the Lord God, "Depart from us; we desire not to know Thy ways."'

Despite the fearful nature of the curse, the venture prospered so much that the Darcy family, about the year 1600, set up another works in the neighbourhood of Guisborough; and as this also brought considerable wealth to the owners, a third was started at Sandsend in 1615. Many others followed, and in 1649 Sir Hugh Cholmley started the works close to Saltwick Nab, within a short distance of his house at Whitby. But although there must have been more than twenty of these works in operation in the eighteenth century, owing to cheaper methods of producing alum the industry is now quite extinct in Cleveland.

The broad valley stretching from Guisborough to the sea contains the beautifully wooded park of Skelton Castle. The trees in great masses cover the gentle slopes on either side of the Skelton Beck, and almost hide the modern mansion. The buildings include part of the ancient castle of the Bruces, who were Lords of Skelton for many years. It is recorded that Peter de Brus, one of the barons who helped to coerce John into signing the Great Charter at Runnymede, made a curious stipulation when he granted some lands at Leconfield to Henry Percy, his sister's husband. The property was to be held on condition that every Christmas Day he and his heirs should come to Skelton Castle and lead the lady by the arm from her chamber to the chapel.

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The old church of Upleatham, standing by the road to Saltburn, is a quaint fragment of a Norman building. The tower, bearing the inscription 'William Crow, Chvrchwarden Bvlded Stepel—1664,' is an addition to what is probably only part of the nave of the little Norman building. It is now used merely as a cemetery chapel, but it is picturesquely situated, and on the north wall the carved Norman corbels may still be seen.

CHAPTER IX

FROM PICKERING TO RIEVAULX ABBEY

The broad Vale of Pickering, watered by the Derwent, the Rye, and their many tributaries, is a wonderful contrast to the country we have been exploring. The level pastures, where cattle graze and cornfields abound, seem to suggest that we are separated from the heather by many leagues; but we have only to look beyond the hedgerows to see that the horizon to the north is formed by lofty moors only a few miles distant.

Just where the low meadows are beginning to rise steadily from the vale stands the town of Pickering, dominated by the lofty stone spire of its parish church and by the broken towers of the castle. There is a wide street, bordered by dark stone buildings, that leads steeply from the river to the church. The houses are as a rule quite featureless, but we have learnt to expect this in a county where stone is abundant, for only the extremely old and the palpably new buildings stand Christ. Then comes Herod's feast, with the King labelled *Herodi*. The guests are shown with their arms on the table in the most curious positions, and all the royal folk are wearing ermine. The coronation of the Virgin, the martyrdom of St. Thomas a Becket, and the martyrdom of St. Edmund, who is perforated with arrows, complete the series on the north side. Along the south wall the paintings show the story of St. Catherine of Alexandria and the seven Corporal Acts of Mercy. Further on come scenes from the life of our Lord. There seems little doubt that all the paintings, including a number of others in the transepts and elsewhere that are now destroyed, were whitewashed over at the time of the Reformation, and it was during some restoration work carried out in 1851 that indications of the paintings were accidentally laid bare. When the whole of the walls had been cleaned, careful coloured drawings were made, then colour wash was applied again, and the priceless paintings disappeared for a generation. The objections to what had been considered improper wall decoration for a parish church in the nineteenth century having been reasoned away, the pictures once more appeared, but in a very different condition to their first resurrection. However, the drawings were in existence, so that a careful restoration was possible, and as we see them to-day the subdued tones closely follow the original colours.

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The simple Norman arcade on the north side of the nave has plain round columns and semicircular arches, but the south side belongs to later Norman times, and has ornate columns and capitals. At least one member of the great Bruce family, who had a house at Pickering called Bruce's Hall, and whose ascendency at Guisborough has already been mentioned, was buried here, for the figure of a knight in chain-mail by the lectern probably represents Sir William Bruce. In the chapel there is a sumptuous monument bearing the effigies of Sir David and Dame Margery Roucliffe. The knight wears the collar of S.S., and his arms are on his surcoat.

When John Leland, the 'Royal Antiquary' employed by Henry VIII., came to Pickering, he described the castle, which was in a more perfect state than it is to-day. He says: 'In the first Court of it be a 4 Toures, of the which one is Caullid Rosamunde's Toure.' Also of the inner court he writes of '4 Toures, wherof the Kepe is one.' This keep and Rosamund's Tower, as well as the ruins of some of the others, are still to be seen on the outer walls, so that from some points of view the ruins are dignified and picturesque. The area enclosed was large, and in early times the castle must have been almost impregnable. But during the Civil War it was much damaged by the soldiers quartered there, and Sir Hugh Cholmley took lead, wood, and iron from it for the defence of Scarborough. The wide view from the castle walls shows better than any description the importance of the position it occupied, and we feel, as we gaze over the vale or northwards to the moors, that this was the dominant power over the whole countryside.

Although Lastingham is not on the road to Helmsley, the few additional miles will scarcely be counted when we are on our way to a church which, besides being architecturally one of the most interesting in the county, is perhaps unique in having at one time had a curate whose wife kept a public house adjoining the church. Although this will scarcely be believed, we have a detailed account of the matter in a little book published in 1806.

The clergyman, whose name was Carter, had to subsist on the slender salary of L20 a year and a few surplice fees. This would not have allowed any margin for luxuries in the case of a bachelor; but this poor man was married, and he had thirteen children. He was a keen fisherman, and his angling in the moorland streams produced a plentiful supply of fish—in fact, more than his family could consume. But this, even though he often exchanged part of his catches with neighbours, was not sufficient to keep the wolf from the door, and drastic measures had to be taken. The parish was large, and, as many of the people were obliged to come 'from ten to fifteen miles' to church, it seemed possible that some profit might be made by serving refreshments to the parishioners. Mrs. Carter superintended this department, and it seems that the meals between the services soon became popular.

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But the story of 'a parson-publican' was soon conveyed to the Archdeacon of the diocese, who at the next visitation endeavoured to find out the truth of the matter. Mr. Carter explained the circumstances, and showed that, far from being a source of disorder, his wife's public-house was an influence for good. 'I take down my violin,' he continued, 'and play them a few tunes, which gives me an opportunity of seeing that they get no more liquor than necessary for refreshment; and if the young people propose a dance, I seldom answer in the negative; nevertheless, when I announce time for return, they are ever ready to obey my commands.' The Archdeacon appears to have been a broad-minded man, for he did not reprimand Mr. Carter at all; and as there seems to have been no mention of an increased stipend, the parson-publican must have continued this strange anomaly.

It is difficult to say whether the public-house was conducted in the crypt beneath the church or not. I am inclined to think that Mrs. Carter's inn was the present 'Blacksmith's Arms,' but there is distinct evidence for stating that cock-fighting used to take place secretly in the crypt. The writings of the Venerable Bede give a special interest to Lastingham, for he tells us how King Oidilward requested Bishop Cedd to build a monastery there. The Saxon buildings that appeared at that time have gone, so that the present church cannot be associated with the seventh century. No doubt the destruction was the work of the Danes, who plundered the whole of this part of Yorkshire. The church that exists to-day is of Transitional Norman date, and the beautiful little crypt, which has an apse, nave and aisles, is coeval with the superstructure.

The situation of Lastingham in a deep and picturesque valley surrounded by moors and overhung by woods is extremely rich.

Further to the west there are a series of beautiful dales, watered by becks whose sources are among the Cleveland Hills. On our way to Ryedale, the loveliest of these, we pass through Kirby Moorside, a little town which has gained a place in history as the scene of the death of the notorious George Villiers, second Duke of Buckingham, on April 17, 1687. The house in which he died is on the south side of the King's Head, and in one of the parish registers there is the entry under the date of April 19th, 'Gorges viluas, Lord dooke of Bookingam, *etc*.' Further down the street stands an inn with a curious porch, supported by turned wooden pillars, bearing the inscription:

'Anno: Dom 1632 October xi
William Wood'

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Kirkdale, with its world-renowned cave, to which we have already referred, lies about two miles to the west. The quaint little Saxon church there is one of the few bearing evidences of its own date, ascertained by the discovery in 1771 of a Saxon sundial, which had survived under a layer of plaster, and was also protected by the porch. A translation of the inscription reads: 'Orm, the son of Gamal, bought St. Gregory's Minster when it was all broken and fallen, and he caused it to be made anew from the ground, for Christ and St. Gregory, in the days of King Edward and in the days of Earl Tosti, and Hawarth wrought me and Brand the prior (priest or priests).' By this we are plainly told that a church was built there in the reign of Edward the Confessor.

A pleasant road leads through Nawton to the beautiful little town of Helmsley. A bend of the broad, swift-flowing Rye forms one boundary of the place, and is fed by a gushing brook that finds its way from Rievaulx Moor, and forms a pretty feature of the main street. The cottages in many cases have preserved their thatched roofs, and have seldom more than one story; but they invariably appear well preserved and carefully painted, although these stone-built houses, with leaded casements, give little scope for ornament. But the Helmsley folk have realized the importance of white paint, and the window-frames, and even the strips of lead that hold the glass together, are picked out in this cheerful fashion. In the broad market-square the houses are large, but their gray respectability is broken by creepers and some pleasant spots of colour. The corner nearest to the church is particularly noticeable on account of a most picturesque gabled house, with a timber-framed upper floor—a style of construction exceedingly rare in these parts of Yorkshire. The old stone cross, raised above its worn steps, stands in the open space close to the modern market hall, and humbly allows the central position to be occupied by a Gothic cross recently erected to the memory of the late Lord Feversham, of Duncombe Park.

A narrow turning by the market-house shows the torn and dishevelled fragment of the keep of Helmsley Castle towering above the thatched roofs in the foreground. The ruin is surrounded by tall elms, and from this point of view, when backed by a cloudy sunset, makes a wonderful picture. Like Scarborough, this stronghold was held for the King during the Civil War. After the Battle of Marston Moor and the fall of York, Fairfax came to Helmsley and invested the castle. He received a wound in the shoulder during the siege; but the garrison having surrendered on honourable terms, the Parliament ordered that the castle should be dismantled, and the thoroughness with which the instructions were carried out remind one of Knaresborough, for one side of the keep was blown to pieces by a terrific explosion and nearly everything else was destroyed.

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All the beauty and charm of this lovely district is accentuated in Ryedale, and when we have accomplished the three long uphill miles to Rievaulx, and come out upon the broad grassy terrace above the abbey, we seem to have entered a Land of Beulah. We see a peaceful valley overlooked on all sides by lofty hills, whose steep sides are clothed with luxuriant woods; we see the Rye flowing past broad green meadows; and beneath the tree-covered precipice below our feet appear the solemn, roofless remains of one of the first Cistercian monasteries established in this country. There is nothing to disturb the peace that broods here, for the village consists of a mere handful of old and picturesque cottages, and we might stay on the terrace for hours, and, beyond the distant shouts of a few children at play and the crowing of some cocks, hear nothing but the hum of insects and the singing of birds. We take a steep path through the wood which leads us down to the abbey ruins.

The magnificent Early English choir and the Norman transepts stand astonishingly complete in their splendid decay, and the lower portions of the nave, which, until 1922, lay buried beneath masses of grass-grown debris, are now exposed to view. The richly-draped hill-sides appear as a succession of beautiful pictures framed by the columns and arches on each side of the choir. As they stand exposed to the weather, the perfectly proportioned mouldings, the clustered pillars in a wonderfully good state of preservation, and the almost uninjured celestory are more impressive than in an elaborately-restored cathedral.