

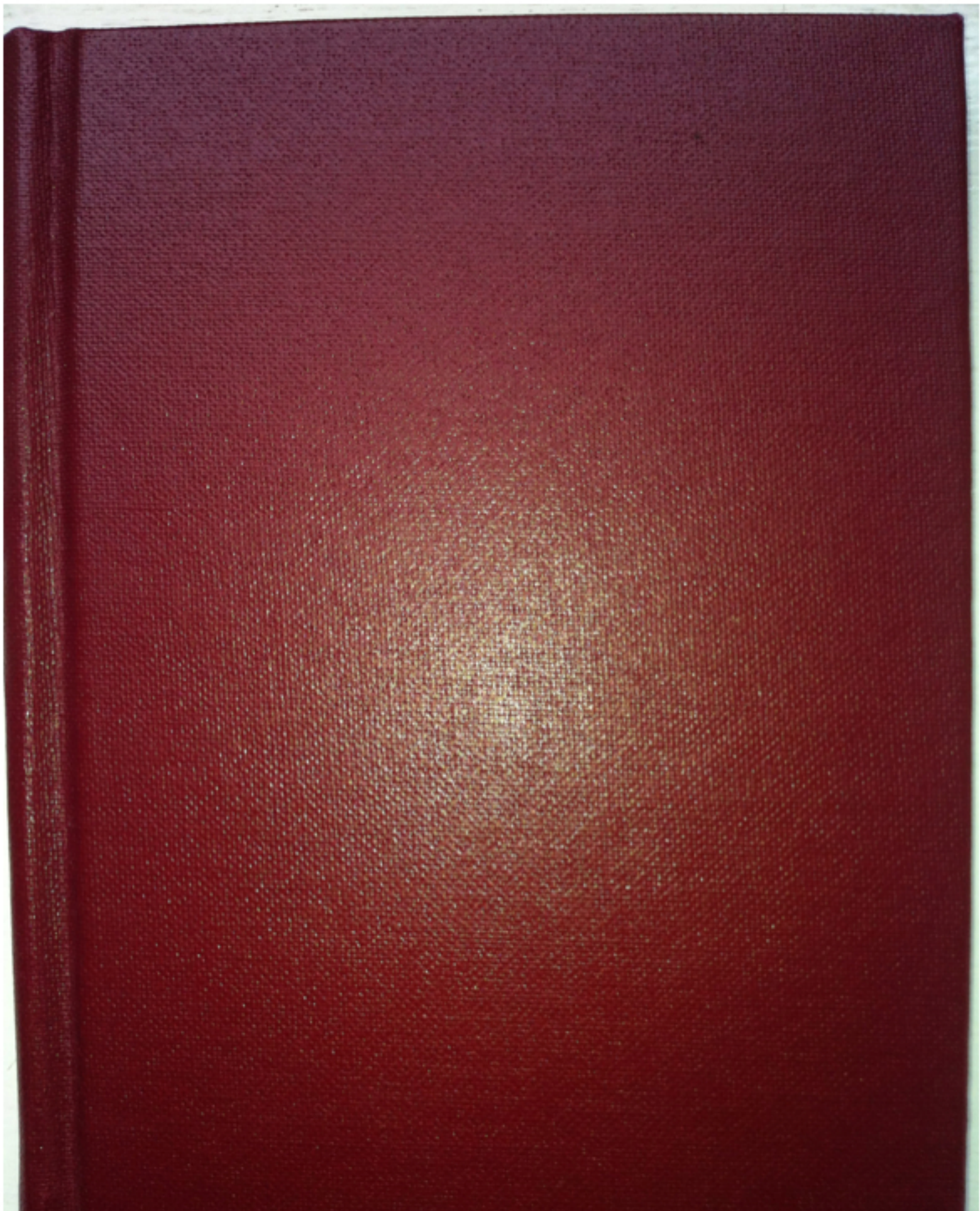
*LIBERATED FOR THE WORLD
FROM BATLEY LIBRARY*

HOWLEY HALL

HOWLEY HALL BY SIR JOHN SAVILE

SIR JOHN SAVILE

PART 1



Very
large

7

PAPER

SP = $\frac{1}{f}$ 1-25

WORKS PUBLISHED BY
J. FEARNSIDES & SONS,
Commercial Street, **BATLEY.**

HISTORY OF HOWLEY HALL

FOURTH EDITION. ILLUSTRATED WITH VIEWS

Of the Hall as it was in its past splendour, and as it is now in ruins ;
Mr. Whitaker's House, Stone where Nevison killed Fletcher, Lady
Anne's Well, Howley Tunnel, Woodkirk Station, and the late John
Brook tied to a tree in Soothill Wood.

To which is added an account of the Prince of Wales Bridge,
and other recent discoveries and information.

PRICE SIXPENCE.

SPLENDID LITHOGRAPHED

VIEWS OF HOWLEY HALL,

IN ITS PAST SPLENDOUR AND PRESENT RUIN.

On Fine Drawing Board, 20 inches broad by 14 inches deep. Price
(Plain) 1s. ; (Coloured) 2s. each ; or in Rosewood, Maple, or Gilt
Frames, from 5s. to 20s. per pair.

Also, Correct Views of the above-named Hall on
Note Paper and Cards—One Half-penny each.

HISTORY ^{OF} THE SHODDY TRADE

ITS RISE, PROGRESS, AND PRESENT POSITION.

BY SAMUEL JUBB

Price—Gilt, 1s. ; Cloth, 9d. ; Covers, 6d. each ; or by Post for 7 Stamps

RISE AND PROGRESS OF BATLEY,

By Jas. Willans. Price 4d.

RECOLLECTIONS OF DEWSDALE

Fourth Edition. Revised & Enlarged. X 24

—HISTORY—

OF THE FAR-FAMED

HOWLEY HALL

NEAR BATLEY, YORKSHIRE,

AND ITS ENVIRONS, VIZ:—

Mr. Whitaker's House,—Stone where Nevison Killed Fletcher,—Fieldkirk Fair,—Lady Anne's Well,—Soothill Hall and Soothill Wood, with Interesting Particulars about Prince of Wales Bridge, the G. N. Railway, and other Additional Matter.

EXTRACTED FROM SCATCHERD'S "HISTORY OF MORLEY,"
AND OTHER SOURCES.

Illustrated with Eight Views.

Namely:—

Howley Hall in its ancient greatness,—Howley Hall in Ruins,—Mr. Whitaker's House,—Stone where Nevison killed Fletcher,—Lady Anne's Well, Howley Tunnel, Woodkirk Station,—and John Brooke tied to a tree in Soothill Wood.

PRICE SIXPENCE.

BATLEY:—

L. FRANKS & SONS, PRINTERS, AND BOUNDERS.



Howley Hall. - Near Batley.
(IN ITS ANCIENT GREATNESS.)

Published by J. Fearnside & Sons, Batley.

This magnificent mansion was built by

SIR JOHN SAVILE,

At a cost of £100,000,

BETWIXT THE YEARS 1585 AND 1590.

HOWLEY HALL.

Hail, HOWLEY HALL! dear rural ruin, hail!
Hail! mouldering walls which overlook the vale
Where first the animating cuckoo sings,
And where the virgin primrose soonest springs.
Here happy hearts enjoy delightful hours,
Among the woods, or sat among the flowers.
With mirth or music sweet the moments pass,
While summer parties pic-nic on the grass.
The jocund jest and joyous laugh are here;
And all these charming scenes are very dear
To every heart that seeks to banish care
By coming here for pleasure, and fresh air.

B. PRESTON, AUTHOR OF "LOCAL LAYS."

"IN this township," (*i. e.* Morley) says Dr Whitaker, "is Howley (the Field on the Hill), which for several generations was the magnificent seat of an illegitimate branch of the Saviles; though by address, and Court favour, they outstript the heads of the family, for a time, in honour. It was built upon a fine commanding situation, by Sir John Savile, afterwards Baron of Pontefract, and finished in the year 1590,* but received considerable additions from his son, the first Earl of Sussex of that time. Camden, who saw the house when new,

* Lord Burghley built his great houses at Theobalds and Burghley, about the same period. See Ellis's Letters, vol. 3, p. 191. New Series.

calls it "Ædes elegantissimus." At this time the more ancient mansion of the Mirfields, situate about two hundred yards to the North West, was abandoned for a bolder and more commanding situation. Part of this is still preserved in out-houses and offices. And one part, which appears to have been the Chapel, exhibits some appearances of antiquity greater than I have ever observed in a domestic building, and probably not later than 1200."

If Dr. Whitaker be right that Sir John Savile built Howley Hall, which, we are elsewhere told, cost above one hundred thousand pounds,* he must have been early engaged in stone and mortar after the death of his father, Sir Robert, who was buried at Batley, as the Register shews, in May, 1585: so that if finished by 1590, this vast mansion was, considering the age, very soon completed. The Earl of Sussex may also have made additions to it, and he did so, probably, between the years 1646 and 1660; from the Roman Doric, introduced by Inigo Jones about 1630, is apparent on the Porter's Lodge. Some additions were undoubtedly made to the hall about 1661, but I rather think from some cir-

* The young reader must always bear in mind the difference in value of money from its present worth, according to the time in which it is said to have been expended. Now as in the reign of Henry the 8th, a given sum was worth more by nine or ten times than it is now, it may well be imagined that in the reign of Elizabeth, one hundred thousand pounds would be an immense sum to lay out in building. I cannot refer to Fleetwood's

cumstances, that the Earl of Sussex (Thomas) was then dead. I have in my possession a stone which came from "the ruins," and has abutted against a wall. In front is the owl (the family crest,) on one side a man's head, and on the other a rose with the date 1661, and the letters J. V. below it. Now this J. V. I take to be the initials of one of the Villiers' family, into which Thomas married; and I shall presently make it appear pretty evident that Lady Ann Villiers, (afterwards Savile) his widow, was residing at Howley in 1663. But the latter part of the extract from Dr. Whitaker's book is what I have chiefly to dilate upon. It is the remains of the ancient mansion of the Mirfields, which most attracts, in these days, the notice of the rambler.

No antiquary should visit these ruins without carefully perusing the capital account of Haddon Hall, in Derbyshire, by Mr. King, to be found in the sixth volume of *Archæologia*, page 358. By the aid of this, and what has been told me by the Whitley family, for some generations living at the farm-house, I have been enabled to form a tolerable idea of the seat of the Mirfields. I take it principally to have consisted of a large square court, well defined by the site of the out-buildings in the present farm-yard, where we still see the entrance to the Chapel and part of an open gallery, once extending through a great part of the square. Behind this have been, unquestionably, the bedrooms.

But, to form a more correct notion, the reader must imagine the roof of what now looks like a

porch* taken off, and the wall run up two stories high above the round arch of the doorway; for in fact, the Whitleys, even, can recollect the pulling down this part of the building, and putting on of the present roof. From them I know that there was a chamber and belfry,† as it was called, above the Chapel, now so like a porch, and that the way thereto from it, was through a doorway on the right side and up a winding staircase, the traces of all which are distinctly visible. Mr. King says,* with reference to his plan of Haddon Hall,—“K and L are what I call the Lady’s apartments, from whence is a steep staircase *near the arch leading to the Lady’s Chapel.*” Now I think with these hints, an attention to Mr. King’s plan, and a minute examination of what is perceptible, the curious visitor may easily discover the Chapel, the entrance thereto from the court, the Lady’s apartments, and entrance to the Chapel therefrom.

There is one thing very curious and striking upon entering the porch-like structure, which is, a large arch directly facing you, and more like a window than a doorway. This, however it certainly has been, but the masonry being far from strong, and the mansion easily entered by this way, the outshot or projection with its superincumbent stories, may have been an addition for better security. Two things rather

* See an engraving of this in Dr. Whitaker’s, Leeds, vol. 2, p. 240, plate 2.

† This, however, I believe to have been not the Chapel, but the dinner bell.

incline me to this opinion. One is, that the architecture seems not so ancient as the rest of the building. And the other is, a manifest contrivance to protect the doorway by spears. I am quite surprised how any person having the eye of an antiquary, could overlook so palpable a design as this. Dr. Whitaker has favoured the public with an engraving of this entrance† in which the very holes for the pike or spear are shown, and yet he makes no mention of them, or indeed of some other curiosities which I shall notice. But whoever will examine the slanting direction of these holes, will at once discover the reason for it.

As to the parts where we perceive the Saxon zigzag, or early Norman arch,* this I take to be the most ancient part of what remains of the house. A small portion of the ancient lobby or gallery is still visible, and just as the offices and small rooms to which there are various staircases from the court, are described by Mr. King, even so we have a specimen in the buildings at Howley.

THE OLD TOMB.

Before we quit the present farm-yard, I must

† See History of Leeds, vol. 2, p. 240, plate 2. The interior archway, it must be here noted, is much larger than the plate represents it.

* Upon very minute inspection I perceive the two arches have belonged to still older buildings than those in which they are now walled, especially the zig-zag arch, which has evidently been broken and disjointed. The stone also is quite different from any visible in these parts. The semicircular arch displays a number of birds with their heads around the moulding. just as I have seen them in a Church at York. These have perhaps belonged to

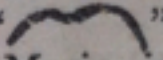
notice a curiosity the most remarkable, almost, that I ever met with—a relic which is perhaps unique of its kind, and which has puzzled me not a little. It appears to have caught the eye of Dr. Whitaker or his draughtsman, the late Mr. Thomas Taylor, of Leeds, architect; but, by some unaccountable accident, the drawing has got jumbled in among the antiquities of Dewsbury. Here again I must refer to the History of Leeds, plate 2nd, p. 298, where it is described as “a Tomb of later date” than the sculptures above it.

Now, in the first place, I have to remark that this is not, nor ever *was*, a tomb, or any thing like one. Secondly, that it is much more ancient than the coffin-stone of Savile;—and thirdly, that no person of our day ever saw it, or, perhaps, any thing like it, except in the strawfold at Howley.—At all events I never saw such a thing described by any antiquary.

When Dr. Whitaker and his draughtsman saw this stone, it lay square with the modern and common stone below it, nearly as it is seen in their engraving. It had long been used in connection with that as a watering trough for cattle, but the lower stone is quite of a different kind, and has not, perhaps, been taken from the quarry quite sixty years.

It is painful to discover blemishes and carelessness in the productions of men of real talent and genius; but, as an antiquary, I cannot be faithful to my trust in neglecting their oversights, and concealing their absurdities. Had my predecessors only just taken the trouble to

inspect the under part of their "Tomb," or stone trough, and examine its interior, their illusions would have vanished.

This remarkable stone, which is hollow, is wrought on its three sides, and two of the devices are given in Dr. Whitaker's engraving. I am not so much of a botanist as to say what the plant is which has been engraven on the one side,* but it strikes me that the Saxon "" either for Mirfield or (as I think) for Maria, is to be seen on the other side. The dimensions of its cavity are two feet six inches in length, one foot three inches in breadth, and eleven inches in depth, which leaves two inches and three quarters for the thickness of the stone. From these premises the antiquary will perceive that it has stood upright in its original situation, and that the supposition of a *Tomb* is preposterous.

But what has this stone been? or for what purpose hollowed out? Aye! "there's the rub," and to give an answer to the question requires some portion of the knowledge of a Pegge—a Gough—a Fosbroke, and some portion of the perseverance and prying curiosity of a Hutton.

It is much easier to determine what this stone has not, than what it *has* been. There clearly has been a stone with some finial above it, and another stone below it, which, together perhaps,

* An able architect and tolerable antiquary tells me it is the

may have formed the head of a Cross;* and within the cavity, if this be so, has been an image of the Virgin, or a crucifix. That something has been fixed upright in this tabernacle there seems no doubt, for there are two holes exactly correspondent at the top and bottom, two inches each in diameter, palpably for the introduction of an iron bar or shaft, and to which the image being fastened, may have been secured. The very course indeed of this rod is perceptible from top to bottom of the interior, and probably, before the holes were plugged up and it were wrought into a trough, there were other vestiges. All that I can learn from the old tenants at Howley is, that they remember some stone or two corresponding apparently, with the one in question, but that they were broken in pieces many years ago.

HOWLEY BLOWN UP.

“Neither the exact period of the decease nor interment of Thomas Savile, first and last Earl of Sussex of that name,” continues Dr. Whitaker, “is known; but after his decease, Howley was little frequented by the Brudenell family, who succeeded to the estate by marriage; and about the year 1730 an agent, named Christopher Hodgson, prevailed with the then Earl of Cardigan, by false representations, to give orders

* Another thing proving it the head of a Cross, is certain holes wrought on the sides for the reception of ornaments, valuables offered to it perhaps, or, at all events, for evergreens, garlands, &c., wherewith such Crosses were anciently decked out. See plate of Headington Cross.

for the demolition of this magnificent fabric, which was carried into execution with the exception of some vast fragments of massy grout work at the angles, the rest was blown up with gunpowder. Here tradition reports that Reubens visited Lord Savile, and painted for him a view of Pontefract, a subject altogether unworthy of such a pencil. And here Archbishop Usher condescended to assume the disguise of a Jesuit, in order to try the controversial talents of Robert Cooke, the learned vicar of Leeds. On the demolition of Howley Hall, the wainscot was sold about the country, and in the year 1787 many rooms remained in Wakefield fitted with the wainscot brought from Howley, and bearing date 1590. The Presbeterian Meeting-house, at Bradford, was also fitted up with the wainscot brought from this place."

THE SAVILE FAMILY.

Thomas Viscount Savile, Earl of Sussex, being for obvious reasons, a prominent character in my history, I have endeavoured to trace him, but in vain, to the period before-mentioned. An ancient document in my possession proves him to have been living in 1651, and his hand-writing in 1650, conveys the idea of his being then an aged man. Indeed, as he was, early in James's reign, in Parliament with his father for Yorkshire, and (if my memory serves me) about 1615, gave land to Headingley Chapel, he must have been a good age in 1650. That he was dead in 1663, I think appears from the mention of Lady Sussex as then at Howley Hall, in Ralph Oates's account of the "Farnley Wood Plot." I know that he

Batley 1635, and that the next Vicar, Josias Broadhead, was presented by Edward Copley, Esp.; but this proves nothing, for that living was presented to alternately by those two great families, as it now is by their successors, the Earl of Cardigan on the one hand, and Lord Grey de Wilton on the other.

There is great inaccuracy in Dr. Whitaker's account of this family, in various respects, and a prodigious skip from about the middle of the seventeenth century to the demolition of Howley Hall, in 1730, which it shall be my endeavour to amend. In the first place it appears that Thomas Savile was *not* "the last Earl of Sussex of that name," for he left a son James, and perhaps a daughter Frances; and that this James was Earl of Sussex, I state on the authority of the Batley Register, the MS collections at Leeds, and of Mr. Gough.—The first informs us that this James was living at Howley in 1671, and was buried at Batley on the 11th of October, in that year,—a son of his called also James, having been interred there on the 16th of July preceeding. The next authority states that "Francis, Lord Brudenell, died in the lifetime of his father, having married Frances, only daughter of James Savile, Earl of Sussex—that she left him a widower in June, 1695—that by her he had two sons, George and James, and three daughters, and that George died July the 5th, 1732."—And lastly, Mr. Gough says, that "James, the last Earl of Sussex of this

I cannot reconcile these conflicting pedigrees, but they show how little Dr. Whitaker knew of this family, and their residence at Howley, and that the Brudenell family did not succeed to the estates upon the death of Lord Thomas as he intimates. It seems even doubtful whether the Lady Frances, whom one of the Brudenell's married, was his daughter or his grand-daughter; but, from her dying in 1695, and leaving five children, I should infer the former. Lord Thomas, however, had a sister of this name who married Dr. Bradley, Rector of Ackworth, and lies buried there, and this may have occasioned the mistake. Be that as it may, there are grounds for believing that after the death of James, Earl of Sussex, in 1671, Howley was little frequented by the Brudenell family

SIR JOHN SAVILE.

"Sir John Savile," proceeds Dr. Whitaker, "the builder of this house, who lived to enjoy his own work forty years, patronised the town of Leeds, where he became the first Alderman under the original charter, and seems to have been held in great respect. As to his political life, one character may be read in his vaunting epitaph, and another, in the accounts of his *impartial* contemporaries. As Custos Rotulorum and a Magistrate, his conduct was so selfish and arbitrary, as to produce a letter of complaint against him from Lord Sheffield, Lord President of the North, to Lord Ellsmere (Chancellor). In consequence of this, and in order to avoid the disgrace of being put out of the Commission, he humbly besought the Chancellor to free him

resolution being to withdraw himself where he might more peaceably pass his life in expectation of a better,—a fit of seriousness which does not appear to have come upon him, till his misconduct was grown so notorious that he could no longer hold his place. The Chancellor's endorsement on this letter is rough and authoritative. "There is nothing but his own fault, and his disorderly and passionate carriage of himself, ill-befitting a man of his place and calling, that draws upon him these troubles; and, therefore, I commend him in making this suit."

"After this disgrace, however," says the Doctor, "he lived fifteen years longer not quite so mortified to the world as he professed, and at one time, perhaps, intended to be; for in this interval, he made his peace with the Court, during which he had many contests with Sir Thomas Wentworth. At length Wentworth's sudden advancement sent him, (as Lord Clarendon says), a poor despised old man, into the country, where he died not long after.

In a forgoing page I have stated that it was the superior talents and learning of Sir John Savile, and his great popularity as a leader in the house of Commons, which raised him into consequence and power, rather than into favour in the Court of James; and with this narrative even that of Hume* agrees; yet Dr. Whitaker would have it believed that his promotion was gained only by address and sycophancy,—Knowing that this distinguished Nobleman was a Puritan, or of the Presbeterian party, and, of

course, a man of liberal principles as parties then went, he would needs degrade his reputation, as plainly appears from the acrimony of the foregoing passage, where, instead of the words "impartial contemporaries," he ought to have written inveterate enemies. These people, in fact, to say the least of them, were a set of intriguers and political weathercocks, who, while Sir John was usefully serving his country as a Magistrate, and enriching our neighbourhood by his endowments, his patronage, and his munificence, were seeking nothing but their own advantages.

The charges against Sir John Savile of selfish and arbitrary conduct, are so general and indefinite that one can form no opinion of their justice now. All that we can say of them is, that they were preferred under a reign in which the immortal Bacon was condemned for corruption—that they were countenanced by such men as Clarendon, himself convicted of "arbitrary and tryannical proceedings in his office of Chancellor," and banished the country; and by Strafford, whose arbitrary principles and spirit conducted him to the scaffold. I do not allude to the crimes of these culprits by way of palliation for our great countryman, if really guilty, but the censure cast upon him comes with a bad grace from people of their cast, and who, blind to their own misdeeds, can only see them in a political opponent. But the endorsement of Lord Ellesmere does not seem to refer to any corruption or illegal act, committed by Sir John, but rather to some ebullitions of passion in the

perhaps, gratuitous office ; and discovers an infirmity common to the best of men, and indicative of a forgiving temper rather than otherwise. In short, the "head and front" of Sir John's offence is, that he was a Presbeterian, and opposed to despotism.

J. J. Cartwright, Esq., in his "Chapters of Yorkshire History," says that, "the foremost Yorkshireman in the early part of the reign of James I. was undoubtedly Sir John Savile, of Howley." In all probability, this nobleman came into Yorkshire when in his 35th year, and took possession of Howley Hall on its completion. Coming, as he did, amongst a manufacturing population, he made commercial interests an especial study ; and having been returned to represent the county, in the first Parliament of King James I., he took a very prominent part in the discussions on commercial matters, and very soon became a favourite amongst the clothiers of Morley, Leeds, Dewsbury, and the district. On one occasion a debate arose about a new patent for dyeing and dressing woollen cloths, which led to numerous complaints of the stagnation of the cloth trade by different members of the House. Sir John took an important part in the discussion, and quoted the following statistics bearing upon the question. He told his hearers that some thousands of pounds' worth of cloth remained upon the hands of the manufacturers in his county, the buyers being so few ; that 13,000 men were occupied with this kind of work within ten miles of his house, 2,000 of whom were householders, and the value of whose respective

also 800 householders, makers of cotton, who were not worth 30s. each. He thought this state of the country could not endure a month.

Sir John was keeper of the rolls for the West Riding; high steward of Pontefract, Wakefield, and Bradford; six times M.P. for the county. He was a Trustee for the Batley Free School, as well as a Governor of the Wakefield Grammar School.

“According to the same noble historian,” says Dr. Whitaker, “his son was one of the most faithless of men, having been the instrument of inviting the Scots by means of a forged letter, purporting to be signed by many of the nobility, to invade his native country.

HOWLEY HALL STORMED AND PLUNDERED.

“The two great houses of the Saviles are reduced to a few fragments, but the principal stock would never have made their mansion a sacrifice to indignant and high-spirited loyalty, which was the fate of that at Thornhill. Howley, however, was held for the King, and stormed and plundered by the other party, which occasioned the following memorial from its owner:—

“Thomas, Lord Viscount Castlebar in Ireland
—his case—

“The Queen's Majesty being advanced and gone from the city of York, into the Southern party, William, then Marquis of Newcastle,

Majesty's forces in these Northern parts, marched his army to Pontefract; and from thence, in the beginning of June, 1643, he advanced towards Howley House, then a garrison for the Parliament under Sir John Savile, of Lupset, near Wakefield, Knight, with one Yates, his Captain-Lieutenant, an old soldier as was pretended; but having planted two great pieces of cannon against and played with them for some few days, the garrison not being provided of necessaries and accomodations, surrendered up the house, on the 22nd of June. Sir John and the soldiers, whereof Yates were very sore, blasted and spoiled of gunpowder, were sent prisoners to Pontefract Castle, where, for some time, they continued, and the house being well furnished with household stuff and goods to a good value, belonging to the owner thereof, Thomas Lord Savile; the said goods and household stuff were all pilferred and plundered by the soldiers of both parties, and sold to the country people, whereupon the Lord Savile applies himself to the King and Council, at Oxford.

“ But this proved of little service to him.

“ At the Court, at Oxford, July 26, 1643.

This day, upon consideration of Lord Savile's case concerning his goods at Howley House, in the County of York, and the state of the war now raised, His Majesty thought fit, by the advice of his Privie Council and Council of Warre, to declare that this is a warre raised by rebels, and not by us, and that rebels,



MR. WHITAKER'S HOUSE.

the indulgence of the laws, subjects, and to be tried by the laws as subjects of the land cannot, by any art of theirs, take away the property or right of any other subject, more than trespassers and felons would in a time of peace.—And, therefore, His Majesty hath thought fit to declare that whatever goods during the present rebellion have been, or shall be, taken by rebellious armies from any good subjects, and shall be retaken by any of His Majesty's forces, ought to be restored to the first owners, wheresoever and howsoever the same shall be found, and the true owner may take the legal remedy for the same. But, in such case, where goods, redeemed from robbers and rebels' could not possibly be known to be other than rebels' goods, there it is conceived equitable that some recompence should be given to the person that redeemed the same, and that His Majesty be judge thereof."

HISTORICAL CONNECTIONS.

So much has been said of Lord Thomas Savile and the forged letter in a former page, that I shall now only address myself to the latter paragraph of Dr. Whitaker. It needs, in fact, some explanation, for what with an error, (perhaps of the press) an infusion of bombast, and a perplexity of thought most singular, it is scarcely intelligible to any reader.

"Howley," says Dr. Whitaker, "was held for the King."—Howley, says history, and the foregoing narrative, was held for the parliament.—
 "Howley" says the former "was stormed and